

ADOLF LOOS AND THEORIES OF ARCHITECTURE
AND THE PRACTICAL ARTS
IN NINETEENTH CENTURY AUSTRIA AND GERMANY

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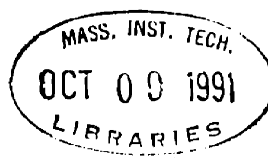
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Signature of Author _____
Mitchell Schwarzer
Department of Architecture
May 28, 1991

Certified by _____
Stanford Anderson
Professor of History and Architecture
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by _____
Stanford Anderson
Chairman
Department Committee on Graduate Students



**Adolf Loos and Theories of Architecture
and the Practical Arts
in Nineteenth Century Austria and German**

by

Mitchell William Schwarzer

Approved by _____
Eduard Sekler
Professor of Architecture
Harvard University
Thesis Advisor

Approved by _____
Francesco Passanti
Assistant Professor of History of Architecture
Thesis Advisor

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates changes that occurred in architectural culture in respect to conditions of modernity. Large-scale industrialization and urbanization caused dramatic ruptures with traditional social and economic hierarchies, forcing a reconceptualization of the theoretical constructs underlying architecture. During the course of the nineteenth century, writers on architecture took an active role in attempting to make sense of these changes. By the end of the century, the Viennese architect and theorist Adolf Loos set forth a critical project, often in confrontation with the views of others, to overcome the growing separation between the realms of reality and representation in design. The particular objective of this study is to situate Loos's texts within the intellectual context of Austrian and German writings on architecture and the practical arts. Such theories prefigure important expressions of modernism in the twentieth century. These writings also express a deep range of thoughts on the changing material and intellectual conditions affecting the visual arts. They exemplify a long series of attempts to create a unified identity for architecture in a world of new social relations and value systems. Despite amorphous conditions which favored social heterogeneity and difference, writers sought uniformity and an authoritative ground for architectural logic.

The textual discourse in journals and books reveals the mental structures and preoccupations of writers in the grips of rapid transformation. On the practical level, new functional needs led to an expanded and diverse range of building types and plans. Further, industrial advances in construction technology and the use of new materials such as iron and glass challenged the applicability of traditional architectural forms for these new buildings. In turn, in a theoretical vein, debates on ethnic and historical genealogy and the epistemological or ontological foundations of all aspects of design turned architectural thought away from its former reliance on classicist paradigms of knowledge. It was also during the nineteenth century that historical consciousness structured architectural epistemology. As traditional guarantors of knowledge were questioned, the entirety of concepts defining architecture was transfigured. Loos and other writers sought to re-define the now hotly contested concepts of craft, art, architect, beauty, function, and truth. Conceptual production was frequently crafted through binary oppositions such as national/international or real/ideal. Loos's response to these developments was divided. On the one hand, he recognized cultural fragmentation and argued for the separate development of art and architecture. On the other hand, his vision of a design world dominated by the hand crafts and aristocratic values constitutes the Enlightenment vision of stability amidst progress.

Thesis supervisor: Stanford Anderson
Title: Professor of History and Architecture

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To my parents, Sigmund and Genia

PART I

"Extremities in the modern world clash in close proximity, so that there is a finer, harder line than usual to divide them. There is a cruelty in this, - a kind of desperation that is dramatic."¹

Hart Crane

INTRODUCTION

The intellectual flowering of architectural theory in the German language came during the nineteenth century. Although architectural works were published in German since the early sixteenth century, both the quantity and the expansiveness of inquiry significantly grew after 1800. Previously, the Italian, French, and English languages had dominated architectural writing.² After 1800, German joined English and French and became one of the three principal languages of architectural discourse. Furthermore, in architectural writings before 1800, the range of inquiry had encompassed matters of civil architecture and construction, the theory of the orders, and investigations on geometry and perspective.³ As the nineteenth century opened, the treatise in particular was superseded by new texts which took up the historical and philosophical questions inherent in architecture's entry into the modern age.⁴

Of far reaching consequence for this occurrence was the modernization of the Germanic lands during the eighteenth century. After the recovery from the effects of the Thirty Years War (1618-48) and the final removal of the Turkish threat to Austria in 1683, the Austrian and German lands began to develop many of the cultural features characteristic of bourgeois capitalism; the growth of factories and cities, secularization, and the recasting of social hierarchies. In the scholarly realm, a reorientation of knowledge away from Christianity and antiquity led to a heightened search for first order causes through a transcendental subject, and the birth of modern history and aesthetics.⁵ The problem of the ultimate nature and origins of architecture were taken up in the philosophical aesthetics of Immanuel Kant and Johann Joachim Winckelmann's histories of art. Both Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe confronted the cross-cultural issues surrounding the understanding of architecture in a world of expanding epistemological sources.⁶

During the nineteenth century, these processes of modernization greatly accelerated. Specifically for our interests here, spiraling literacy and increased production of texts altered the understanding of the world. Architectural publishing proliferated, and design journalism was institutionalized on a mass scale. Architectural culture readily engaged a written investigation of visual form and social reality. Writers criticized the relationship of architectural form to content, and in their multifarious definitions of content as spirit, use or structure, posited proposals which redefined the essence of the architectural act.

It is important to point out that these tendencies reflect the new status of writing in the nineteenth century. The desire to textually explain and define architecture coincided with a fragmentation of the unity of knowledge and written understanding. Architectural writing was stimulated by the breakdown of the classical epistemological paradigm, and, at the same time, contributed to the emerging heterogeneous organization of knowledge on architecture. In other words, the rise of writing within architectural culture is both a consequence and cause of the modernist metaphysics of disjointed meaning and appearance.

The history of writing has not been a linear development toward objective clarity. Writing did not progressively elucidate reality, and in the modern era, did not objectify the signified in ever-more lucid symbolic forms.⁷ Rather, as Gilles Deleuze describes the antagonism of capitalist society to textual understanding, he stresses the loss of authority that accompanied writing in the modern era:

The reason for this is simple: writing implies a use of language in general according to which graphism becomes aligned on the voice, but also overcodes it and induces a fictitious voice from on high that functions as a signifier. The arbitrary nature of the thing designated, the subordination of the signified, the transcendence of the despotic signifier, and finally, its consecutive decomposition into minimal elements within a field of immanence uncovered by the withdrawal of the despot - all this is evidence that writing belongs to imperial despotic representation."⁸

To great extent, the passion of the nineteenth century architectural discourse reveals the loss of an authoritative presence within writing.

Frustration at the difficulty of assigning normative meanings to changes in society and architecture connotes deeper foreboding of collapsing signficatory foundations underlying the new cultural systems. Caused by the gradual emergence of Europeans from social isolation, and their entrance into international and interlingual contacts and relationships, the semantic unity of meaning was lost.⁹ Unlike the state of unitary language in pre-modern culture, Mikhail Bakhtin describes writing in the modern era as a struggle among socio-linguistic points of view. Between word and object, between representations and the speaking subject, there now exists an elastic environment of other, alien words about the same object: objects are tangled by shared thoughts.¹⁰

The absence of an authoritative discursive rationale for architecture is inseparable from the concurrent expansion of writing, scholarship and the sources for epistemological authority. Intellectual hunger and disunity drove the search for a common and true foundation of architectural knowledge, yet these features were the direct results of unprecedented growth in knowledge about the world. As the codes of classicism weakened, textual ventures for a renewal of architectural truth became both acute and destabilizing. Yet, a coherent paradigm was not re-established, as a disparate commerce of ideas characterized the written rhetoric of renewal for architecture. Journeys for truth set out along all points of the mental compass: in nostalgic reminiscences of the past, and bold prophecies of the future; in inward journeys to the nature of the imagination, and cool discernment of building materials and physical mechanics.

No architectural theorist is better known for his revulsion toward the nineteenth century world of ambiguous signfication and false appearance than Adolf Loos. The dissolution of the stable meanings of traditional culture provoked Loos to explore alternative realities for architecture and design. Like other writers, Loos recognized the

nineteenth century dispersal of meaning in architecture and the practical arts, and yet was equally unwilling to accept the entanglement of signification. Motivated by a belief in self-contained meanings, Loos was driven to untangle the dense and dissenting references clouding the truth-value of objects. As Francesco Dal Co comments, "certain episodes of modern architecture may be seen as attempts to realize an ultimately impossible utopia."¹¹ Loos's plea to restore the harmony of the pre-modern order of design is remarkable not so much for its uniqueness as for its severity.

Architecture and Building

Up until around 1800, the domain of architecture maintained a sharp distinction between its intellectual and practical aspects. The urban landscape of Central European cities of that age can, for our purposes, be divided between realms of architecture and building. To begin with, architects practiced within narrow bounds. Architecture was an intellectual intensification of building according to the value systems of the upper classes. As high design, architecture was a liberal art, understood by reference to *fabrica*, and to *ratiocinatio*.¹² It was much concerned with the cultivation of reason, as embodied in academic training, and the classical tradition as it had developed since the Renaissance. Builders, for their part, although certainly conversant in religious and other symbolic meanings, were of economic necessity foremost occupied with the practical tasks of carpentry, masonry-work and engineering. They realized their world not as a dimension of transcendent stratagems, but as a response to everyday needs.

The nineteenth century heralded a new era. Barriers between architecture and building broke down as the middle classes assumed a dominant presence in Europe's great cities. The century-long changes which mark Vienna's most ubiquitous building type, the mixed-use apartment block, are illustrative of this transfiguration in social and architectural relations. Up until this time, architects had limited their gaze to relatively

restricted building types. The architectural vocabulary of the Baroque and Rococo Age of the eighteenth century was largely bestowed on churches, palaces, and important government and commercial buildings. For remaining edifices, restraint and simplicity prevailed. To someone born in the eighteenth century, a respect for time-honored boundaries of signification was essential for architectural order and propriety.¹³

The plain surfaces and simple structures of lower class residential neighborhoods were little visited by the deep-seated thoughts of an educated architect. More consciously urban than the peasant structures which were their forbears, their spatial and formal texture nonetheless primarily expressed their occupants' immediate lives and needs. On the street, the scene was one of one- and two-story buildings, whose pitched attic-roofs were logically illuminated by small dormers. The second story featured simply-framed windows. Ground story entrances were surmounted by a simple segmental arch or trabeated entablature. Only a few concessions, such as signs and large shuttered openings were made to infrequent retail needs.

This experience of the city, although never wholly stable, changed dramatically during the first half of the nineteenth century. Architecture and building were swept up by tumultuous forces. The social fabric of city life was altered by agricultural, industrial, and cognitive revolutions. Architects were, as they had always been during periods of urbanization in history, transmitters of high culture. Yet, to an unprecedented degree, the fluctuating values of architecture affected all aspects of the modern cityscape. Unlike the Hellenistic cities of Alexandria and Antioch, or Imperial Rome, where cultural transmission never occurred between the upper and lower classes, in the modern industrial city the values of cosmopolitan urbanity permeated the humbler classes. Vienna, like Paris, London and Berlin, was becoming a *Weltstadt*, characterized by a level of social heterogeneity and cultural domination never seen before in history.

As the city's population, wealth, and outlook grew, architects worked to intensify the physical density and cultural image of the Hapsburg capital. In the expanding middle and lower class neighborhoods, new blocks of buildings were clearly more self-conscious, invoking regulating and decorative elements of architectural vocabularies: preeminently, the classical. Still quite restrained in their appropriation of this language, apartment buildings spoke a new set of concerns, as well as origins. These often four-story blocks attempted to demonstrate a proper, urban existence for their residents. The newly urban citizens gazed at a coherent visual appearance modulated by pavilion ends, quoins, and rustication. Imitating the sober, aristocratic buildings of the prior century, these recent blocks eschewed inclining attic sections, reminiscent of a noble origins. Atop facades marked by regular, rectangular windows ordered by giant pilasters and capped by pediments were cornices of modillions and console brackets. Parapets, balustrades and urns often added to the studied weight of the composition.

By 1900, the steady escalation in architectural appropriation of all aspects of city building reached new heights. An exuberance of detailing and ornament lent the taller (six-story) buildings the complexity of visual signification formerly accorded only to the most important city monuments. Now, even the homes of the lower classes could participate in the meanings of aristocratic architecture. And, in the residential neighborhoods of the well-to-do middle classes, borrowing from a variety of sumptuous architectural languages (especially that of eighteenth century palace design) was extreme. Some buildings reverted to steeply pitched roofs, but now in a wholly French manner, while others grossly exaggerated horizontal proportions. Throughout, the facade plane became plastic, as bays, porches, and large sculptural elements welled out of masonry shells. This elastic impression was strengthened by great projecting belt courses, irregular roof silhouettes, and corner towers with cupolas and finials. At the ground level, the art of selling was advanced by large expanses of glazing and articulating iron work. Entrances

were often ceremoniously marked by great arches supported by columns, and even sculptural figures.

As the visual story documents, facades became dramatically more complex over the course of the century. As such, they reflected the pluralistic systems of knowledge competing for power in the architectural culture of the modern city. Vienna of the Ringstrasse era was a megalopolis, home to a population with diverse religions and languages. The grand ornamental schemes of architecture mirrored the adoption of urban culture by the masses of people converging on the city from all parts of the Empire, and especially the more agricultural eastern realms. A multitude of real estate developers, industrialists, bureaucrats, academics, and artists contended for the design and organization of urban form and space. The late nineteenth century in Austria and Germany was characterized by great social mobility and a mode of production increasingly oriented to middle class consumption. As Hans-Joachim Hubrich writes of the thematization of bourgeois objectivities in art and architecture: "*Für die Neue Bewegung war das Bürgertum die tragende gesellschaftliche Schicht, von der alle Anregungen ausgingen bis hin zur ideologischen Selbstüberschätzung.*"¹⁴

Yet, becoming urban was no simple task, as it meant divesting oneself of the immediacy of nature, religion and rural traditions, and accepting a new set of values. This axiological transformation brings up the ideological contrast which emerged during the late nineteenth century between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, popularized by Friedrich Tönnies.¹⁵ In this opposition, the debate over pre-industrial community versus industrial society, a change is described where stable religious and ethnic values are transposed onto a disengaged field of social reproduction driven by production and consumption. We can also understand the clash of these worlds in the description by Norbert Elias, in Über den Prozess der Zivilisation (1939), of the German definitions of *Kultur* and *Zivilisation*. Elias notes that while *Kultur* is commonly defined through traits which favor static

interpretation and delimit its contours, *Zivilisation* "refers to something which is constantly in motion, constantly moving 'forward'."¹⁶

In a simple sense, what characterized the architectural penetration of the building trades¹⁷ was the relinquishment of building for architecture, of governing practical values for intellectual values. But, in a deeper sense, if building was forever changed by the events of the nineteenth century, so too was architecture. Architecture, like building, no longer existed within *Kultur*, a cohesive totality of cultural ideals. As the German sociologist Georg Simmel deciphered the spirit the modern era, he represented a "struggle of life against the form as such...not only a negative, passive dying out of traditional forms, but simultaneously a fully positive drive towards life which is actively repressing these forms."¹⁸ In describing his concept of life in contrast to form, Simmel argued that comprehensive cultural ideals could no longer exist in the modern industrial city, because "life wishes to obtain something which it cannot reach. It desires to transcend all forms and to appear in its naked immediacy."¹⁹

'Textual issues in Austria and Germany on architecture emerge precisely from the fact that the shift in values from building to architecture could never be completed. Given the conditions inherent in *Zivilisation*, a commonly agreed upon set of urban values to direct design in the megalopolis never materialized. Such axiological homogeneity would contradict the pluralistic social relationships of the modern city. Indeed, sharp differences and incongruities emerged among the diverse architectural institutions. For one thing, transformed by applied science, engineering emerged as a new practical discipline challenging architectural hegemony over building activity. For another, the identity of architecture was fragmented by the different educational programs of the fine arts academy, technical university, applied arts schools, and general university. Architecture's artistic foundations were also shaken. The fine arts of painting and sculpture, encouraged by philosophical ideas on beauty, assumed greater conceptual independence from practical

building. Finally, the increasing economic hold of industrial capitalism made buildings a prime object of commerce.

Once supremely confident of its balance of the practical and intellectual, architecture now entered into a crisis of identity. As it expanded its self-definition to meet the demands of the industrial age, the tight grammar that had formerly regulated its speech was attenuated. The parameters of the discipline were fragmented. For instance, with the expansion of its social identity, architecture lost continuity with its former existence among the upper classes. Further, as scholarly knowledge accumulated, what had earlier seemed a coherent body of knowledge now revealed itself as sublime. Overall, where the limits of architecture had once been judiciously cultivated, they were now confused with a host of other activities. The clarity of the architect's mission was lost.

Designs for plans, facades, and interiors responded to the uncertain epistemological status of architecture. Buildings, furniture, and other practical arts objects were read more as expressions of complexity and ambiguity and less as palpable images of reality. The imitation of stone in stucco and other materials heightened the architect's sense of facade as artifice. The new social entanglement of signs in bourgeois society, once clearly differentiated in aristocratic culture, further convinced architects that the dominant modern design philosophy was a really a form of nihilistic eclecticism. Toward the end of the century, they increasingly greeted new buildings and practical art objects with scorn. Never before in the history of architectural reflection had architects spewed such venom at their own profession.

A good deal of this controversy revolves around the definition of the subject in a world where production is consumption and consumption is production.²⁰ The textual discourse on architecture caught the axiological volatility surrounding the architect during the nineteenth century. Critical writing probed the dimensions of opacity now enveloping the visual world of practical art objects. Writers attempted to cleanse, to unburden

buildings saturated with incongruities. They also sought to direct, to lead the design disciplines back from a philistine wilderness to an arcadian presence. Yet, as I noted earlier, and will continue to emphasize throughout this study, writing in the modern era produces "nothing but signs of its resemblance,"²¹ signs unable to reproduce the world of the real. As Foucault writes, the order of the modern era "with its permanent grid of distinctions, is now only a superficial glitter above an abyss."²²

The Scope of this Study

The goal of this dissertation is to examine the conceptual assemblage which constitutes Adolf Loos's responses to the question of architectural identity. The narrative trajectory of this choice will lead us to consider the writings of Loos on architecture and the practical arts as part of a greater discourse on the modern condition in nineteenth century Austria and Germany. Since Loos's writings touch deeply on many issues concerning architectural identity, this study is organized around an examination of his theoretical questioning of several key areas of design in the practical arts. Despite the fact that the texts of Loos which I consider were written between 1897 and 1913, they offer a commanding presence over several of the nineteenth century's more fervent debates. Creative in their evocation of a range of concerns relating to the architecture and the practical arts, Loos's texts gesture into the layers of irresoluteness that so typify the age.

The structure of this study is organized in three parts, which correspond to: 1.) historiographic issues pertaining to Loos's textual reception as a modernist; 2.) general revisions and reformulations which characterize nineteenth century discourse on architecture and the practical arts as a result of the axiological uncertainty accompanying industrialization and urbanization; and 3.) a more detailed analysis of the transfigured conceptual relationships between architecture and both art and history during this time. To begin with, in Part One, we must initially confront the fundamental material and

intellectual conditions which prompted the twentieth century writing of the history of architectural events between the late 1800s and the 1930s as the history of modernism. How was a definition of modernism gleaned from the disorderly mass of events characterizing design during this time? The fusion of understanding under the sign of modernism, as we will see, forced prejudicial interpretations of both nineteenth and twentieth century design, and led to simultaneously myopic and panoptic representations of Loos's significance to modernity.

By setting forth the historiographic terrain, I want to pose the overall question: how can one try to account for, and challenge, representations of architectural modernism through a re-examination of Loos's intellectual environment? Parts Two and Three of the dissertation provide an in-depth discussion of several intellectual currents in nineteenth century theories of architecture and the practical arts. The choice of these currents emerges from a condensation of themes within Loos's pre-war texts. To this end, the narrative structure of Chapters Two through Eight is based on my abstraction of major ideological arguments to which Loos devoted his attention, and is not an abstraction of the greater set of issues debated by writers during the nineteenth century. Important debates on city planning, for instance, are left out since Loos expressed only marginal interest in them. Although a number of issues recur throughout the dissertation, it violates the sense of nineteenth century writing to treat its discourses as unitary. Therefore despite occasional over-lapping, my abstraction of Loos's writings results in a series of discrete discourses on crucial themes.

The four chapters of Part Two cover Loos's involvement in several broad debates confronting architectural culture during the course of the nineteenth century. As indicated above, this literature addresses different aspects of architectural culture's attempts to redefine its image in the face of changing economic and social circumstances. It is in this respect that I relate Loos's writings to those of his forerunners and contemporaries in

Germany and Austria: texts by architects, art historians, architectural critics, and aesthetic philosophers. This spectrum of concerns emerges first (in Chapter Two) amidst the century-long battle of the styles, the ruminations on truth in design as identifiable with the values and forms of a historic period. Next, in Chapter Three, given Loos's extensive reflections on the crafts, I will consider reactions to the crisis of machine production among both architects and practitioners in the crafts industries; and seek to understand how an idea of utilitarian values emerged alongside those of traditional values in the debate on *Kunstgewerbe* (the practical arts). Closely related to this debate, were attempts to define architectural character through reference to either national or trans-national identity. Thus, in Chapter Four, I will look at the dichotomy, within which Loos was clearly caught, between the benefits of exposure to the latest international trends in design and that approach gained from immersion within the embedded traditions of a nation and/or localized region. Finally, in Chapter Five, I will look at writings on materials and construction (particularly iron) through the opposition of idealist (stemming from the intellectual tradition in architecture we have been discussing) or realist (engaged more in practical activity) lenses. The opposition between the ideal and real formulates the recurrent philosophical conundrum challenging nineteenth century architectural writers, that desire to uncover a constitutive route to the formal realization of practical arts objects.

Part Three examines more closely those philosophical issues emerging from discourses on art and history. It is in both these domains, of course, that Loos made statements of particular gravity. I will examine first (in Chapter Six) how Loos reacted to the *Moderne* and *Art Nouveau* movements at the turn of the century. His efforts to separate art and society contradict their aims to unify architectural activity and industrial culture. Second, given Loos's equation of ornament and the primitive and his equally well-known rejection of architecture as art, we shall look, in Chapter Seven, at the transfiguration of relations between the concepts of art and architecture over the course of

the nineteenth century. In Chapter Eight, I will conclude this study by examining more closely Loos's philosophy of history, and his attempt to conflate the past into a continuum of eternal meanings. His historiography contrasts with most modernist programs for architectural knowledge, partaking of argumentation more akin to the Enlightenment than the teleologically-oriented nineteenth century.

My aim in presenting these critical discourses is to enter into an exchange with nineteenth century architectural theories and with other inquirers seeking an understanding of them.²³ Such dialogue, I hope, will expand the contemporary awareness of the range of ideas inherent in the architectural response to modernism during the nineteenth century. Overall, the schemes for writing on architecture and the practical arts sought to bridge an epistemological chasm. As the various debates which I will discuss make clear, this chasm was perceived diversely, and took on many forms and hues, expressing in its reaches the widening uncertainties of man's new relationship to all aspects of his former existence. Since the gulf separating design from secure sources of knowledge was dissimilarly manifest, textual responses appeared in all aspects of architectural consciousness, and disclose the effects of what I have been describing as a modern condition of consciousness.

Notes

1. Hart Crane, The Complete Poems and Selected Letters and Prose of Hart Crane, ed. Brom Weber (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966), p. 201.
2. This point is indirectly substantiated by the particularized account of architectural writings contained in Architectural Theory and Practice from Alberti to Ledoux, ed. by Dora Wiebenson (Chicago: Architectural Publications, 1982).
3. For an overview of the conceptual range of architectural writing during this time see V.C. Habicht, "Die deutschen Architekturtheoretiker des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts" Zeitschrift für Architektur und Ingenieurwesen, 1916, 1917, 1918.
4. Builders handbooks and commentaries on geometry, on the other hand, became the foundations for experiential studies on the properties of materials, construction technologies, climactic considerations, and related matters.
5. As Michel Foucault describes it, the pre-modern epistémé constituted a unified epistemological field, what is described as a unifying mathesis. In its place toward the end of the eighteenth century was substituted an opening to the all-knowing subject, and an interest in noumena. The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences (New York: Vintage, 1971), pp. 244-247.
6. See Fischer's Entwurf einer historischen Architektur (1721) and Goethe's Über deutsche Architektur (1772).
7. On this theory of the progressive development of signs see Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume 1, trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven: Yale, 1953), pp. 85-88.
8. Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari, Anti-Oedipus, Capitalism and Schizophrenia, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: Minnesota, 1983), p. 240.
9. Mikhail M. Bakhtin, "Epic and Novel" The Dialogic Imagination, trans. Carol Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: Texas, 1981), pp. 11 & 30.
10. Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel" The Dialogic Imagination, p. 276.
11. Francesco Dal Co, Figures of Architecture and Thought: German Architectural Culture 1880-1920, trans. Stephen Sartarelli (N.Y.: Rizzoli, 1990), p. 13.
12. The understanding of architecture as a liberal art, reinvigorated during the Italian Renaissance, had its origins with the late Roman republic of the 1st century B.C. Of great influence on Vitruvius was M. Terentius Varro's Disciplinae, which listed architecture (and medicine) as part of the seven linguistic and mathematical arts; composing the medieval *trivium* and *quadrivium*.
13. See Paul Mebes, Um 1800, Architektur und Handwerk im letzten Jahrhundert ihrer traditionellen Entwicklung (München: F. Bruckmann, 1908).
14. Hans Joachim Hubrich, Hermann Mutlhesius: Die Schriften zu Architektur, Kunstgewerbe, Industrie in der Neuen Bewegung (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1981), p. 12.
15. See Friedrich Tönnies, Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft (Leipzig, 1887).

16. Norbert Elias, The History of Manners, trans. Edmund Jephcott (N.Y.: Pantheon, 1978), p. 5.
17. Much like the industrial machine's destruction of the ornamental trades.
18. Georg Simmel, The Conflict in Modern Culture and other Essays, trans. K. Peter Etkorn (N.Y.: Teachers College, 1968).
19. Ibid., p. 25.
20. Karl Marx, Grundrisse, Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy, trans. Martin Nicolaus (London: Penguin, 1973), p. 93.
21. Jean Baudrillard, Simulations, trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton, and Philip Beitchman (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), p. 45.
22. Foucault, The Order of Things, p. 251.
23. See Dominick LaCapra, History and Criticism (Ithaca: Cornell, 1985), p. 36.

CHAPTER 1

LOOS IN THE MIRROR OF MODERNIST HISTORIOGRAPHY

In post-war historical representations of modern architecture, Adolf Loos's buildings, projects, and texts are accorded masterful status. Loos is credited, along with other Viennese architects of the time, with sweeping away the cobwebs of historicist culture and embracing the modern age. In particular, Loos has been described as a firm opponent of the stale academicism and crass commercialism to which architecture of the nineteenth century had supposedly been reduced. Interestingly enough, the renown of Loos's achievement is also related to his isolation from his own time. Placed in developmental succession behind Otto Wagner, Joseph Olbrich and Josef Hoffmann, Loos is often described as the most radical of this group of Viennese, evading the common "decorative" idioms of architectural culture in the Hapsburg capital for his own stark idiolect. Thus, the second historiographic feature most attributed to Loos beyond his role in defining the Modern is his position as outcast and revolutionary.

Twentieth century architectural literature credits Loos's writings and designs with undeniable influence upon the high modernism of the 1920s and beyond. In a formal sense, Loos is acknowledged for powerfully influencing the development of an architecture of white, unadorned prismatic cubes. In 1957, Reyner Banham wrote of Loos as having:

settled the problem of ornament as Alexander settled the Gordian knot, shockingly but effectively, and his ideas had gained an empire wider than the Macedonian's wildest dream. It is impossible now to imagine how the modern Movement might have looked as a decorated style, but it might have been just that, had not its creators had ringing in their ears Adolf Loos's challenging equation; Ornament equals crime.¹

No less important, however, Loos has been read as a champion of modernist functionalism, that state of mind which defined objectivity on the basis of the ability of the architect to recognize the truth and essence of human needs, and design accordingly. The spatial

organization of his houses, known as the *Raumplan*, featured a radical disposition of internal volumes which may have been an elevational counterpoint to the later designs of De Stijl.² Leonardo Benevolo describes Loos's masterworks of 1910, the house of the Michaelerplatz and Steiner House, as "the first examples of European rationalism...(which) influenced the work of Gropius, Oud, Le Corbusier and other post-war masters."³

What these and other historical representations share is a conviction of Loos's ground-breaking role in creating the modern movement in Europe. Loos, through no small doing of his own, has been regarded to the present day as one of the first true architectural heroes of the twentieth century. Indeed, Loos's American experience, rigid personal habits, largely non-architectural social circles, and confrontational attitude in texts and designs, have been read by historians as defining characteristics of what amounts to a proto avant-garde temperament. Clearly, his atypical persona was seized upon by both contemporaneous and later architectural writers. What is as remarkable as Loos's own attempt to mythologize his work into an ethical crusade, is the persistence to which critics and historians have adhered to that mythology. It is a commonplace notion that representations of Loos or his work have emphasized his decisive break with his historical age and architectural contemporaries, and his iconoclastic and individual struggle for realism. Loos's architecture is often defined as among the earliest in Europe to partake fully of the modern consciousness, and is henceforth separated from the vast bulk of nineteenth century architectural design and writing.

Historical Representations of Adolf Loos

The earliest written representations of Loos repeatedly emphasize his exclusion from the overall architectural milieu in Vienna. Yet, of course, he was well acquainted with the major institutions of architectural culture in the city. The principal participants in the artistic blossoming of Vienna at the turn of the century are commonly seen as: the

Austrian Museum for Art and Industry and its school (Österreichische Museum für Kunst und Industrie, and Hochschule für angewandte Kunst); the artists Secession; and the architectural school of Otto Wagner at the Academy of Fine Arts (Akademie für bildende Künste).⁴ Threads connecting Loos to these institutions were deep. We have only to look to Loos's journalistic relationship with the exhibition series at the museum, and his close ties to its one-time Director, Hofrat v. Scala. What is more, Loos's close relationship with *Secession* design is all too dramatically turned into a fully confrontational stance. Lastly, Loos had a great, and enduring admiration for the work of Otto Wagner, if not for that of Wagner's students.

By anointing himself as the critic of his age, Loos perhaps committed the greatest violence to the historical representation of his internal relationships in Vienna: his own social marginalization. His denial of major architectural commissions by the city's elite no doubt animated the pitch of his rhetoric as the years passed. While perhaps not a conscious outsider early on, he soon found in that role a polemical power denied him by more traditional means and oddly appropriate to a man who anointed himself the demi-god of Viennese wisdom. Viennese art and architectural critics themselves spared little ink to place Loos as a combatant of *Historismus* and *Jugendstil* design. Later, as the idealization of modernism in the 1920s crested, he was described through conceptual premises which concern the historical genesis of modernism itself. Paradoxically, throughout this body of literature, Loos's exclusion from most of the ideas of his historical epoch is held to be responsible for his determination of modernism.

The image of Loos as a lone, confrontational architect stems from Vienna at the turn-of-the-century. The textual portrait of Loos began by emphasizing his alienation from the contradictions of contemporary life. In the earliest assessments of Loos's Viennese works he is described as sharply at odds with his social environment. In a review of the then-recently completed Cafe Museum (1898), Wilhelm Schölermann described Loos

through bi-polar contrasts to the dominant Secession group of artists and architects.

Whereas the Secession is characterized as working with ornament, Loos was cast as the killer of ornament. Similarly, one reads that while the Secession strives to emphasize the individuality of the creative artist, Schölermann depicted Loos as more concerned with the individuality of the materials being used: *"Die Secession arbeitet dekorativ und strebt dahin, die Construction der Decoration anzupassen; Loos arbeitet alles aus der Construction heraus."*⁶

Loos was also depicted as an iconoclast by the Viennese architectural journalist Ludwig Hevesi, in Österreichische Kunst im neunzehnten Jahrhundert (1903). At first, Hevesi admitted that internal divisions were common to the Secession. Although it is true that the common image of the Secession mentions an overflowing of artistry and imagination (as in the work of Olbrich), practical tendencies were active. The school of Josef Hoffmann, ruled by logic and constructive reason, represented this latter direction. Within this more subtly delineated ideological spectrum of the Secession, however, Hevesi reserved the most extreme place for Loos: *"Auf der äußersten Linken dieses Linie steht selbstständig Adolf Loos, der aus Amerika als nihilistisch angehauchter Zweckmensch zurückgekehrt ist und nach manchem sophistischen Seitenprüfung jetzt mit einleuchtender Einfachheit einrichtet."*⁶ By 1907, Hevesi's article "Adolf Loos" consciously traced the singular stamp of Loos's design: that smooth, linear style without any trace of ornament. Yet, while describing Loos as the epitome of stark reason and practicality, Hevesi built upon the growing myth of the architect as a man possessed: *"Dieser junge Mann, frisch von Amerika her, leugnete das alles und betonte die reine Nützlichkeit, die Schönheit des Nurpraktischen, die Vornehmheit des Gewöhnlichen...Er schrieb Feuer und Schwert wie einer, der eine Sendung hat."*⁷

At this early stage of Loos's career, a pattern was set for future textual debate. Loos would be viewed as a moral crusader, cutting through ambiguities in the fight for the

dominance of realism over idealism, purpose over arbitrariness, Anglo-Americanism over German nationalism, and truth over falsehood. In this vein, Julius Meier-Graefe's article "Ein modernes Milieu" (1901) placed Loos in a prominent position in the emerging battle against the dilettantish aspects of contemporary design. Describing the famous Belgian line of Van de Velde whose echoes had reached as far as the barber stools of East Prussia, the art historian Meier-Graefe intoned that ornament should be seen as only a detail, and not a primary analytic instrument of design. Looking to developments in Vienna, he sympathetically observed that Loos was already making furniture without any ornament, and was becoming an influence in the new artistically-creative city.⁸

Almost a decade later (1908), another Viennese architectural journalist, Richard Schaukal reiterated the image of Loos as a solitary warrior, citing as evidence Loos's lack of building commissions and students. Again and again, Loos's alienation was titled rigorous, and responsible for the striking uniqueness of his ideas. Comparing Loos and his contemporaries Schaukal admitted that he is not the only architect considering cultural issues in design. Nonetheless, Schaukel claimed, Loos was the first to take up these issues and perhaps one of the only architects to combat needless ornament: "*Endlich kämpft dieser unbeschäftigte Architekt gegen die Präpotenz des 'dekorativen Elements'. Das tut bei uns wohl kaum jemand.*"⁹ Any other architects participating with Loos in this struggle are not mentioned.

In the same year, Wilhelm von Wymetal speculated on Loos's isolation from the architectural community. How, with neither an official position nor much publicity, Wymetal asked, had Loos become such a powerful figure? His answer once again contributed to the growing myth of the angry warrior: "*Die Ursache davon liegt wohl in der innersten Natur des Menschen und Künstlers Loos selbst, in seinem autarkischen Unabhängigkeits- und Vereinzelungsdrang. Der Künstler, der sich der Einsamkeit ergibt, ist bald mit Lust und Qual seiner schöpferischen Ideen allein.*"¹⁰ Writing a year later

about Loos in Karl Kraus's journal Die Fackel, Robert Scheu again made similar points about Loos's singular qualities. Scheu saw Loos's simple dictum that the form of objects conform to their function as new and brilliant, containing within it revolutionary potential:

Wer war dieser dinghafte Mann, der solchen Zauber aus den gewöhnlichsten Gegenständen herausholte und soviel Glänzend-Selbstverständliches, Kindhaft-Einfaches, Uralt-Neues in so betrickender Form zu sagen wusste? Ein blutjunger Architekt mit schmalem Windhundkopf englischer Prägung und unschuldsvollen Augen, die alles zum erstenmal zu sehen schienen; der ganze Mann vibrierend wie eine Stahlklinge; ein Österreicher, nein, ein Europäer, nein, ein Amerikaner, nein, ein ganz neuer Typus, ein Kosmopolit und just in Wien, der Gesandte einer neuen klirrenden Zeit: Adolf Loos.¹¹

If Loos had amassed quite a reputation in Vienna, he was not generally known outside of Austria or Germany until 1914. He became known to a broader spectrum of Europeans just before the First World War, when a few of his important essays were published in Paris and Berlin.¹² Since the war interrupted architectural culture for five years, Loos's internationalization had to wait until the 1920s. Soon enough, he became an ideal objectification of the early avant-garde architect for those European writers supporting the modern movement in architecture.

The image of Loos as an isolated fighter was perfect material for the writers of modernist narratives between the 1920s and the 1960s. In the subsequent decades of modernist canonization by historians and critics, Loos's ideas and works were recuperated as integral steps in the development of modern architecture in Europe. In text after text, Loos was represented as an early adherent of the new movement, one of those architects (like Wagner, Berlage and Behrens) who made the sudden, if incomplete, breakthrough to mature modernism. Yet, since narrative portraits of the modern movement were often canonized around designs of the late 1920s, Loos's works did not fit into that mature state of being.¹³ Rather, their contribution had to be located in the developmental stage of the movement. Here we can understand the origin of Nikolaus Pevsner's confession that he found Loos's stance between tradition and modernism enigmatic. On the one hand, Loos

was lauded for paving the way for the essential ontological principles of high modernism: his espousal of a functional groundplan, honesty of materials, truth in construction. On the other hand, Pevsner erected an opaque aura around Loos to interpret his deviations (e.g., symmetry, punched windows, classical elements) from the visual canons being established for modernism. Largely on formal grounds, Loos's most important designs and writings before 1914 were consigned to the early phase of the movement.¹⁴

In the first biographic study of Loos in 1931, Heinrich Kulka observed that the moderns of the early 1930s speak of Loos as an inspiration, an *Anreger* and *Vorgänger*.¹⁵ Describing the clear vision with which Loos perceived the world around him, Kulka expounded that Loos's nerves were more modern than those of general mankind. Contrasting Loos's vision to the decadent obscurantism of the 1890s, he related Loos's consciousness to a higher moment in the historical progression of design:

Die Verschwendung von Zeit und Material, die den Banausen behagte, war die Tortur des geistigen Menschen, der seinen Lebensraum durch Verkehrshindernisse verstellt fand. Da kam Adolf Loos und befreite ihn. Er erfernte alles Lebensfeindlich aus der Wohnung und stellte das Notwendige an den richtigen Platz.¹⁶

Later biographers, Ludwig Münz and Gustav Künstler, restated the pioneering efforts of Loos in paving the way for European modernism. As was commonly accepted, the authors credited Otto Wagner with launching modern architecture in Vienna. In their assessment, however, Loos, while belonging in this interpretation to a second generation of Viennese modernists, assumed fundamental importance and singularity as a result of his break from *Jugendstil* ornamentation. They wrote of Loos as a solitary hero: "As an architect Adolf Loos has taken a lonely route."¹⁷ For the authors, Loos had a magnificent vision into the possibilities and needs of building.

Challenges to the modernist canon beginning in the 1950s eroded the need to explain Loos via the historiography of modernism, and narrative representations took a dramatic turn. Most importantly, these new texts noticeably did away with an account of

Loos's deviance from the high style. As the historical understanding of twentieth century architectural history became increasingly independent from the axiomatic projection from the late 1920s, Loos came to be represented on other grounds, some of which were, in fact, anti-modern. Colin Rowe's article "Mannerism and Modern Architecture" (1950), described Loos's Steiner House as not entirely remote from the neo-classical villas as projected by Ledoux.¹⁸ Much later, in Wittgenstein's Vienna (1973), Stephen Toulmin and Alan Janik locate Loos's work favorably in relation to what they see as the barbarisms of Bauhaus modernism. The latter, "lack(ed) Loos's own highly sensitive adaptation of every design to its own specific use...imposed on their buildings a generalized, multipurpose structural design, capable of lending itself to any function."¹⁹ For the authors, Loos like Gustav Mahler represents the last stage of a continuous historical evolution rudely disrupted by the revolutionary activities of such figures as Ludwig Mies van der Rohe or Arnold Schönberg. Recent writers have also become more critical of Loos's status as avant garde warrior, looking to Loos's own involvement in his mythologization. For one, James Shedel (in Art and Society: The New Art Movement in Vienna, 1897-1914 (1981)) observes that Loos had an aggressive sense of his own modernity which he then translated into an unwavering confidence in his ability to identify fellow representations of what he thought modern. The strength of Loos's confidence, Shedel writes, made it possible for him to reconcile seeming contradictions within his own work: "Notwithstanding his strong respect for the classical principles of Greek and Roman art, Loos made himself into a complete prophet of modernity."²⁰ Recently, Roland Schachel has brought up Loos's textual strategy in regard to his own myth-making:

Mit dem Entschluss aber, seine Schriften nicht in Buchform und seine Arbeiten nicht mittels Fotos zu veröffentlichen, sondern aus selbst gewaelter splendid isolation, allein durch die Kraft des Beispiels zu wirken, wehrte Loos sich gegen die sofort einsetzenden Versuche der Vereinnahmung.²¹

Loos's recent textual terrain, however, has become no less heroic than that of canonical modernism. While historical representations of Loos in the past three decades have elicited readings which seek to understand him more fully for his role within Viennese thought than for his ambiguities in comparison to canonical modernism, they have been no less adamant in presupposing a heroic cultural environment.²² By affirming the overriding importance of his interaction with the great figures of the time, increasingly compelling pleas were made for extending Loos's sphere of influence from architecture to broader cultural issues.

Perhaps commencing with the post-modern evaluation of Loos by Aldo Rossi, Loos's revolutionary stature has led to a widespread appraisal of his ideological genesis within circles external to architecture. In his noted article on Loos for Casabella (1959), Rossi linked the ideas of Loos to those of Arnold Schönberg, Karl Kraus, Alban Berg and Anton Webern, those other giants of the turn of the century Viennese intellectual milieu. Looking back at Loos as a fighter for a rational culture, Rossi recognized Loos's emphasis of moral issues and program against the estrangement of the architectural language from practical life as the attempts of a desperate, yet great man to save society from destruction.²³ Along with the then-current structuralist concern with synchronic studies, Rossi's critical study instigated further investigation of Loos's significance in influencing the ethical positivism of Karl Kraus, Ludwig Wittgenstein and others. We are led to believe that Loos's passionate reaction to ornament and his distinction between the utilitarian and artistic blazed the trail for exploration of the boundaries between literature and rhetoric, for Kraus, and logic and metaphysics, for Wittgenstein.²⁴ Indeed, the paring away of superfluous detail became a narrative hallmark of the modernist thought in Loos's Vienna. For Loos and Kraus, to cite the most important relationship, the connection is one of linguistic style and a critical attitude composed of pessimism and messianism. Kraus's arguments about the division of public and private morality in articles like "Sittlichkeit

und Kriminalität" are seen to have had decisive impact on Loos.²⁵ In turn, Loos is claimed to have influenced Wittgenstein in the latter's "attempt to draw a clear line between what can and what cannot be said."²⁶

The Legitimization of Historical Categories

In a broadly historiographic sense, the transference of Loosian meaning from the canon of high modernism in architecture to that of high modernism in Viennese culture in the early 1900s does not alter the image of Loos as presence in modernist ideology. The reference has simply shifted from architectural to cultural modernism.²⁷ The stable historiographic result has been that Loos has retained a dominant position in regard to the emergence of modernism and its successors, and a primary influence on architects ranging from Le Corbusier to Louis Kahn, and on thinkers including Wittgenstein and Adorno.

A tacit structure in many of the historical representations we have discussed above has been the interpretation of Loos's significance to architectural modernism within the parameters of a developmental conception of history. That is to say, history has been viewed as change accompanied by purpose, a panorama of temporal phases within whose contours coherent meaning can be discerned. The concept of developmental history affirms change in a specific direction, and the awareness that which comes later is an unfolding of that which occurred earlier.²⁸ In this regard, much of twentieth century architectural historiography is the successor of teleological visions of history originating in Judeo-Christian theology. Foremost, the teleological notion of historical change stems from the Christian idea that the changes in the human world have "proceeded on a time-line from the Creation to the Last Judgment with Christ's work and death as the central event on it."²⁹ History, according to this interpretation, consists of a beginning, middle, and end. The teleological vision of historical change affirms the regularity of diversity. "The significance of this vision of an ultimate end," writes Karl Löwith "as both *finis* and *telos*, is

that it provides a scheme of progressive order and meaning, a scheme which has been capable of overcoming the ancient fear of fate and fortune."³⁰

As we have been discussing it, textual discourse on the historiography of architectural modernism has often been an exploration for the central event(s) that would constitute a panoptic point for the development of modernism. The disunity of architectural writing, particularly in the nineteenth century, resulted fundamentally from disagreement on the identity of this central event. Even if we assume that nineteenth century historians and other writers held little consensus as to the specific origins or ends of architecture, the search to demarcate a continuous line of development describing architectural events continued in twentieth century representations of Loos and other modernists.

The derivation of the meaning of architectural modernism within such a developmental sequence relates the origin of modernist forms and practices to a series of transformations from a pre-modern state of existence. For very different reasons, yet with startling structural consistency, canonical modernism has been regarded as the fulfillment of this transformative development. In this respect, an immanent idealism colors all aspects of developmental historical representation concerning modernism. An ideal of perfection permeates all historical representations of the development leading to and from this state. Individual events in the developmental sequence of modernism (usually read by historians to encompass half of the eighteenth century, the whole of the nineteenth and much of the twentieth) are unified from the axiomatic definitions given to a conception of this culmination of modernism.

Because of the structure of the plot of modernism, each individual historical event possesses a particular logic. They are colored by the determinate flow of history. This concept of the presence of a historical moment involves the enigma of difference subsumed under the sign of idealization: differences are explainable through reference to their future

convergence in an ideal state. Readings of Loos's designs and texts were no exception, as his deviations from the ideal state of modern history account for his importance to modernism, the instantiation of the teleological ideal. Considering his relation to the manifest movement of modernism and its progression toward an ideal state, Loos's works were represented philosophically as the meaningfulness of the incompleteness of each moment in history.

What no doubt strikes one about historical representations of Loos's architecture are the means by which their authors have abstracted progressive narratives from the ground of historical reality. Historians, interested in individualized events, have sought to understand these occurrences as instances of a generality: that which is neither singular nor universal.³¹ They have therefore reduced a boundless array of varied and contradictory expressions to a generality of understandable and compelling stories, ones whose linearity insists on an incremental development of architectural ideas. As such, textual representations of Loos have reiterated his great accomplishments as components of diverse, yet directed, historical movements. Loos's famous stances, the opposition to ornament, the ideal of truth of material expression, and the new spatial thinking inherent in the *Raumplan*, have been regarded as expressions of a man of genius participating in intimate contact with a particular interpretation of the *Zeitgeist*.

As I have been describing Loosian historiography and teleological sequences, I have been theorizing about how historians condense diffuse historical images into a coherent narrative. Nowadays, it has become a commonplace among contemporary historians to accept that strategies of narration are literary devices relating to the domain of language, and not verifications of the truth between historical statements and their references.³² Narrative historiography opposes the idea that history exists as an untold story; that the past exists in itself; that the past need only be communicated and not constructed.³³ Rather, As Hayden White argues, every representation of the past embodies specific

literary, epistemological, and ideological strategies.³⁴ Analysis of such narrative valuations of historical events points to the need to reevaluate Loos's historical portraits.

Insofar as Loos's texts reflected the dominant influences of his age, it can be said that historical representations of his role in the unfolding of modernism enacted a special delimitation of his identity as an architect. As I have stressed, in historical texts the development toward a state of modernist design proceeded from an unraveling of what had to be looked at as the pre-modern condition of the nineteenth century. The definition of this pre-modern condition, furthermore, must be resolved into progressive and regressive pre-conditions. The developmental emergence of modernism is explored as the significant and final modification of these pre-conditions in a positive direction. Consequently, numerous historical representations of Loos as a ground-breaker of architectural modernism aim at a certain relationship to nineteenth century Austrian architecture and, to a slightly lesser extent, German architecture.

In the texts which constitute the historical representation of early modernism (that phase to which Loos and Otto Wagner are said to belong), nineteenth century architectural thought is either praised for its proto-modernist vision, condemned for its adherence to archaic concepts such as historicism, or simply ignored. As such, Loosian historiography has emphasized his achievements in relation to the other great figures of the unilinear scheme of architectural modernism. From the "pre-modern" era of the nineteenth century, among the Germans, Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Gottfried Semper are accorded such notice.³⁵ For historians of modernism, these designers participate in the creation of an acceptable developmental sequence for a genealogy of twentieth century modernism. Most other "pre-modern" architects were disregarded. The bulk of nineteenth century thought was condemned for not conforming to this developmental logic. Nineteenth century design and writing was condemned for being historicist, for depicting a set of qualities necessarily in opposition to the functional rise of modernism.

The great culprit of the nineteenth century deviation from developmental logic was historicism. Already in the latter years of the century historicism itself had become a negative symbol. By Loos's time, historicism was blamed for most that was decadent and backward in architecture and the practical arts. Yet, as I will describe below, historicism and notions of teleological modernism held a great deal in common. Historicism could be looked at as both: 1.) the recognition of the individuality of every historical phenomenon; and 2.) the recognition of history as a development from which each event draws its meaning.³⁶ While twentieth century writers did not greatly object to the first condition, they consciously opposed the second. If history were taken as source of meaning for all events, they argued, contemporary architecture would be forever retarded. Historicism would suffocate the eyes of observation, and the hands of creativity.

Likewise, historicism can be regarded as an outlook which forces each of us to see past events from a point of view determined, or at least conditioned, by our own individually changing situation in history.³⁷ Predictably, twentieth century writers also condemned such a relativization of experience, this coupling of sensation to a particular situation and process. Historicism signified a vulgar descent into an inverted, and unnatural world. As a consequence, reportedly historicist ideology within architectural culture had been brushed aside. It lacked that honorable feeling for the spirit of the present for which modernist architects such as Loos are said to have been so keenly aware.

Yet, this denial of historicism by modernists disavowed modernism's own origins in teleological historiography. As accounts of a developmental process, many twentieth century historical representations of modernism share a great deal in common with nineteenth century philosophies of historicism. Both stress a belief in the inevitability of certain developments in human history and the interconnectedness of all historical events. Still, as we will see throughout this study, modernism was not unanimously represented as a developmental process. Specifically, Loos's concept of the modern was always connected

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to non-linear and a-temporal notions. Thus, the modern could be defined as progress without uniform development. In this regard, Loos can be looked at as an opponent of both historicism and developmental and teleological modernism. In contrast to these ideas of history, Loos posited oppositional categories as the deeper formulation of historical meaning. For Loos, historicism originated during the latter half of the nineteenth century, and revealed most of the regressive elements of design in his own age to that emergence. Loos's view of history demanded a counterpoint to this phenomenon, and he found it in the design activity of the first half of the nineteenth century.

Biedermeier and Grunderzeit

Often enough, the year of social revolutions, 1848, has been employed as a marker for the dramatic rise of historicism. In Austria, the first half of the century occurring after the Napoleonic Wars (1815-1848) has been called by many writers *Biedermeier* or *Vormärz* (before the March revolution of 1848).³⁸ The second half of the century has been described as the *Grunderzeit* (or founding period).³⁹ From Loos's own words - as well as subsequent historical representations - we discern a clear preference for the *Biedermeier* and a sharp repugnance for the *Grunderzeit*. On the one hand, as Loos argued, it was during the latter era that historicism presented itself to the world in all its destructive form. On the other hand, characterized as a time of stability and simplicity, the *Biedermeier* was seen by Loos as a brief interlude between the neo-classicism of the pre-Napoleonic era and the long wave of historicism that lasted beyond 1900. It is likely that the sober *Biedermeier* facades and integration of the needs of private life into design was favored by Loos as the correct path to modernism. Ludwig Hevesi described Loos as a strong adherent to the rationalistic principles of the *Biedermeier*, which he saw as one of threefold authenticity: "*zweckecht, stoffecht, zeitecht und dazu das denkbar tüchtigste Handwerk.*"⁴⁰

During the *Biedermeier* age, Vienna was transformed from a city of great noble palaces to an urban fabric of sober, utilitarian city buildings. Earlier Viennese monuments to a strict Doric classicism were followed by more restrained public (and largely) private commissions.⁴¹ The most famous *Biedermeier* architect, Josef Kornhäusel, is credited with reducing facade ornament and bestowing upon the Neo-Classical vocabulary of forms a personal and individual interpretation.⁴² As Ottakar Uhl writes, Kornhäusel was the leading architect of the 1820s and 1830s, and a forerunner of twentieth century modernism: "*Sein Werk ist jedoch zugleich auch Vorstoß zur 'modernen Architektur,' es bereitet in vielen schon Adolf Loos vor.*"⁴³ Nevertheless, this *Biedermeier* mentality must be sharply distinguished from that held by Adolf Loos at the turn of the century. Robert Waissenberger calls the *Biedermeier* man more a sufferer than a fighter, directed toward balance and compromise. Amidst these feelings of self-restraint the fight to realize the ideal, as was to come in modernism, was lacking.⁴⁴

As contrast to *Biedermeier* design, the *Grunderzeit* after 1848 (and especially after the 1860s) has been often characterized as the age of rampant historicism, a time of florid ornamentation. From this assessment, a historiographic portrait of superficiality and escapism has emerged. The *Grunderzeit* is condemned for the transformation of architecture from a vital cultural activity encompassing a wide range of human activity into either a stale academic practice bereft of true creativity, a fantastic artistic journey lacking any real purpose. In harsh terms, reminiscent of Loos, the Viennese writer Hermann Broch described late nineteenth century Vienna as the feudal center of a European cultural vacuum.

The essential character of a period can generally be deciphered from its architectural facade, and in the case of the second half of the nineteenth century...that facade is certainly one of the most wretched in world history. This was the period of eclecticism, of false Baroque, false Renaissance, false Gothic. Wherever in that era Western man determined the style of life, that style tended toward bourgeois constriction and bourgeois pomp, to a solidity that signified suffocation just as much as security. If ever society was masked by wealth, it was here.⁴⁵

Likewise, as William Johnston writes of late nineteenth century Vienna: "in contrast to the Parisians, the Viennese refused to think rigorously about their city, its mission, its potential...Sentiment, nostalgia, and carping took the place of genuine self-understanding..."⁴⁶

The *Grunderzeit* is also depicted as a period of unresolved social transition, from aristocratic order to bourgeois liberalism.⁴⁷ Due to their social restrictions, the Germanic middle classes increasingly had marginal influence on political life.⁴⁸ As Carl Schorske describes the Austrian political landscape, the nascent middle classes remained dependent upon the aristocracy to a degree much greater than in France.⁴⁹ By these accounts, the incompleteness of liberal political power in Vienna coupled with the rise of inflammatory nationalist parties increased idealistic undertones in the sphere of arts and letters: political disillusionment was expressed by a disregard for functional design and a love of opulent appearance.⁵⁰ As the story goes, the tragedy felt by so many Austrian artists and intellectuals (including both Hans Makart and Gustav Klimt), especially toward the turn of the century, lay in the escape of the artist from actual life into a world of ideal values. Artists were oriented away from difficult social affairs and toward the romantic realms of nature and the human spirit. In this sense, these historical representations explain a rise toward 1900 in the estimation of ornament and status rather than utilitarian needs and true moral education.⁵¹

Within architectural culture, the portrait acquires additional overtones, most of which emerge from the extraordinary extent to which architectural production was by now colored by the actions of real estate capitalism. Due to unprecedented building activity, especially in the 1890s, *Grunderzeit* design responded to a steady rise in land prices, advances in building and decorative technology, and a growing demand for urban comfort, both practically and symbolically.⁵² The combined effects of factory production and land speculation resulted in greater emphasis on decorative opulence than sober restraint. At

the same time, structural innovation was discouraged by the preoccupation with historical styles. Hence, the historical representation of Austria (and even Germany) in the latter half of the century emphasizes design decisions of a decidedly conservative nature.

Austrian design lacks the daring experiments in glass and iron of Paxton's Crystal Palace in London's Hyde Park or Labrouste's two great Parisian libraries. More often than not, new technological and material devices were given secondary expression or covered up altogether. The impression of *Grunderzeit* theory is that it is a retrograde debate on style.

The negative portrayal of the *Grunderzeit* is also closely related to the modernist dismissal of historicism. Specifically, *Grunderzeit* design is condemned for not fitting neatly into the teleological sequence mandated for a history of modernism. The perception that the second half of the nineteenth century did not fulfill its historical obligation as a breeding ground for twentieth century modernism assumes such meaningful development of historical works of art. Assuming, however, that historical periods do not possess an internal logic of their own, the *Grunderzeit* becomes more a narrative creation than a historical reality. To characterize the *Grunderzeit* overall as a decadent retreat into historic and individualistic design vocabularies is a great oversimplification. As a consequence of historical narration, and not historical fact, most negative connotations attributed to the late nineteenth century are the aftermath of comparisons with twentieth century modernism. Architecture and architectural theory have been overwhelmingly studied in reference to the culminating development of modernism in the twentieth century. As the historical representations of the *Biedermeier* also point out, the late nineteenth century has also been cast in a negative light by what preceded it.

Furthermore, the few positive values which nineteenth century design has been historically represented are situated outside of its confines; either in the organic cultures of classicism or medievalism, or the emergent movement known as modernism. It has been understood

all too frequently as a phase within a linear historical sequence whose values are imposed from outside of itself.

Doubtless, the *Grunderzeit* did embody many of the ornamental excesses and practical denials of which Loos and others were so critical. Still, the age accomplished a number of desirable ends in itself, and if understood on its own grounds instead of those oriented to an opening of the future, or a clouding of the past, the historiographic portrait changes. For instance, the Viennese art and cultural critic Ludwig Hevesi (among other contemporary critics) regarded the *Grunderzeit* as one in which art received its freedom from an earlier bureaucratic stranglehold. Here the nineteenth century was described positively in its own time as an apotheosis of individualism and complete decorative expression. In this spirit, Hevesi described how the great Viennese architects, Hansen, Ferstel, Schmidt, Hasenauer "*trotz ihrer verschiedenen stilistischen Religionen, doch ein unverkennbar wienerisch-modernes Gesamtwerk hinterliegen...Und das bauliche Gerüst dieser Kunst belebte sich allezeit durchaus organisch mit immer neu nachwachsendem Schmuck.*"⁶³ By contrast, Hevesi saw scant accomplishments during the first half of the century (since it was a period of little monumental building activity): "*zwei Denkmäler und eine Anzahl öffentlicher Nutzbauten, das ist die gesamte 'große' Kunst dieses halben Jahrhunderts.*"⁶⁴ In contrast to Loos, Hevesi was deeply critical of its sobriety.

We will be less astonished about the bi-polar oppositions of *Biedermeier* and *Grunderzeit*, functional modernity and historicist nineteenth century, Loos and his contemporaneous architectural culture, if we question the twentieth century's historiographic affirmation of teleological modernism, and its attendant understanding of realism with increasing functionalism at the expense of historicism. Certainly, the struggles at the Weimar Bauhaus between Itten and Moholy-Nagy, the complex metaphysics of De Stijl theoreticians, and the ever-lasting traditionalism in the mind of Le Corbusier cannot be explained by such a simple, progressive evolution. Modern

architecture was not so much the inevitable progress of the consciousness of humanity as the temporary, and select realization of a unique social and design consensus.

As I mentioned in the introduction, the aim of my study will be to reevaluate aspects of the historical understanding of Adolf Loos and nineteenth century architectural theory. Placing Loos in the textual context of the nineteenth century eliminates the masquerade of his detachment from his age.⁵⁵ Alongside achievements in science and technology, the nineteenth century stands out for the unfolding of textual commentary on all realms of human activity, including architecture. It was then, more than any previous time in history, that the printed word became a central fact of cultural mediation for society at large.⁵⁶ Despite the inability to finally achieve certitude, this expansion of the size and scope of the textual realm significantly changed the significative practices of writing, and of course, all aspects of architectural culture.

The Poetics of Architectural Discourse

The nineteenth century witnessed the relinquishment of the central place accorded to the classical treatise within architectural writing. Due to the complexity of issues, and even more to the divergence of opinion, textual structure required more flexibility. Argumentation could no longer be reduced to the general organization of the treatise, even if the treatise itself had undergone great changes during the eighteenth century to accommodate a wider scope of speculation. Whereas the treatise still demanded conformity to classical grammar and vocabulary, the new modes of architectural writing comprehended a range of philosophical positions which displaced classical mores. The new texts were indicative of a dramatic rise in epistemological pluralism. Therefore, in contrast to the essentially descriptive (or interpretive) aims of the treatise, they attempted to explain a multitude of specialized events related to architecture in an industrial age. For the most part, these events had hitherto not existed, gone unrecognized, been considered unworthy

of elevated commentary, or been rudely channeled through interpretive lenses based on antiquity. From technical questions relating to drainage to philosophical ideas on man's place in the universe, the textual debate expansively attempted to explain how architecture related to its rapidly changing world.

Depending upon the type of objects investigated, and aims (and intended audience) of the inquiry, writers seized upon different narrative strategies. While technical reports were favored for questions of construction and building laws, histories and essays often addressed the fundamental problems of architecture's relationship to society. Almost all architectural writing in the nineteenth century took the form of non-fictional prose, and overall its formats included: history, philosophical tract, technical report, essay, and towards 1900, feuilleton.

If nineteenth century architectural theory became a channel through which specialized thoughts were narrated, the structure of argumentation also changed. Unlike classical architectural writing, the new textual genres introduced oppositional rhetoric. Whereas treatises commonly began with an exposition of absolute principles upon which further recommendations and requirements were based, the new texts often began with a negative evaluation of conditions in architectural culture. The positive project was explicitly built upon a critique. It is astonishing how often theoretical proposals were launched through negational polemics, how frequently constructive gestures were preceded by descriptions of the unsatisfactory conditions plaguing architecture and society.

In the essay and feuilleton formats employed by Loos, polemics were even more noticeable than in texts by historians or philosophers. Whereas the latter writers sought to project detachment and objectivity, Loos wrote in bursts of energy, fully realizing the subversive potential of inflammatory prose. Throughout his texts, Loos unfurled shocking characterizations, and was oftentimes unconcerned that the reader follow all the

particulars of a rational argument. His strategy, rather, enforced unavoidable confrontations with metaphorical or synecdochial representations.

The specialization and narrative strategies of the new architectural texts was accompanied by the rise of newspaper, journal, and book publishing. Since its invention in Germany during the Renaissance, the growth and sophistication of the printing trades became intimately tied to larger trends in the history of ideas. Changes brought about by printing affected the transmission of texts, the collecting of data, and the overall workings of the knowledge industry, and encouraged an intellectual environment of investigation and speculation.⁵⁷ As much as they are the result of overall technological progress, advances in printing were also driven by the rapidly growing knowledge industry. "It was not until the end of the eighteenth century at the time of the Encyclopedia that the increase in the output of the press and the interest on technical questions led master printers to search for a way of increasing the speed of the press and of making the labor required of workmen less exhausting."⁵⁸ Of great relevance to nineteenth century architectural printing was the invention of the steam-powered printing press. The first printing presses were built in London and Germany in the second decade of the nineteenth century, and by the 1820s the new power printing machines were employed for newspapers and other publishing activities.⁵⁹ The application of steam power to the printing press allowed a dramatic rise in publishing output, and soon afterwards most cities in the Austrian and German lands had acquired publishing houses. In Austria, the publication of scholarly books was concentrated in Vienna. In contrast, German book publishing, although foremost in Leipzig, was quite dispersed.⁶⁰

Although books on architecture have existed since antiquity, the periodic architectural journal was an outgrowth of the industrial age. Already towards the end of the eighteenth century, irregularly-appearing journals began to be published in the German-speaking lands. Emerging from highly specialized reading circles within

aristocratic society, this first phase of architectural journalism (1789-1829) was highly dependent upon other types of writing and lacked a general, comprehensive approach to architectural culture.⁶¹ Specialized and comprehensive architectural journalism is a product of the latter two-thirds of the nineteenth century. Even more so than with books, the rise of the architectural journal resulted from the deepening complexity of architectural culture. Coordination was needed between the rapidly expanding aspects of architectural culture, which included: new building types; technological and material inventions; social institutions such as museums, schools, professional associations, licensing boards, municipal bodies.

In the German speaking lands, the inauguration in 1836 of the Allgemeine Bauzeitung in Vienna by Christian Ludwig Förster (a planner of the Ringstraße) pioneered the soon to be enormous field of architectural journalism.⁶² Expansive in its coverage of all manner of architectural questions, from purely technical problems to issues of aesthetics and politics, the Allgemeine Bauzeitung - published until 1918 - proved a model for the numerous general architectural journals which emerged in the next six decades. Frequently published by municipal, regional and national architecture and engineering associations, the most noteworthy of these journals included: Zeitschrift für praktische Baukunst (1841-1865), Leipzig; Deutsche Bauzeitung (1868-1942), Berlin; Centralblatt der Bauverwaltung (1881-1944), Berlin; and eventually Der Architekt (1895-1922), Vienna.

As the century neared an end, architectural writing became even more specialized and important within the overall make-up of architectural culture. The *Kunstgewerbe* movement spawned journals like Kunstgewerbeblatt (1884-1917), Leipzig; and later Kunst und Kunsthandwerk (1898-1921), Vienna. The grounding of numerous artistic secession organizations in the second half of the 1890s led to a new phase of architectural journalism.⁶³ In addition to the organs of the new artistic movements such as Ver Sacrum, and Pan, these also included journals of more general interest which increasingly

intermingled questions of architecture with those of art and the crafts, such as: Dekorative Kunst (1897-1929), Munich; Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration (1897-1934), Darmstadt.

In Loos's Vienna, art criticism was also projected into the world of daily newspapers. Whereas earlier writing about the arts in newspapers had been largely descriptive, "the developments of the 1890s demanded a fresh type of critical technique: the understanding of the public at large was no longer able to keep pace with the speed of change, and people now needed critics as interpreters."⁶⁴ Loos was manifestly part of this trend. Many of his earliest articles formed part of a series on the Vienna Jubiläumsausstellung of 1898 for the daily Neue Freie Presse.

As the activity of Loos and others implies, the text was a pivotal framework through which architects engaged in a search for meaning during the nineteenth century. The literature in German on architecture and the applied arts is immense, and perhaps one of the richest sources of ideas on modernism in the visual arts among the European languages. Its pages contain a thorough account of the attempts to adjust to industrial life in Central Europe. Undoubtedly, the ideas contained in this corpus of writings are difficult to generalize. Their approaches to resolving architecture's problems form a complex set of ideological dimensions. To some degree, a plurality of ideological positions is that attribute most revealing of nineteenth century thought.

Pluralism within nineteenth century thought suggests a decisive expansion of the parameters of knowledge accessible to architecture. In particular, a revolt against the metaphysical and analytic (*a priori*) reasoning which had supported that system demanded a new philosophy of design attentive to actual events. To speak of such a development involves an explicit preference for empirical facts, as opposed to imagined ideals. In the intellectual affairs of architecture between the 1820s and 1880s, the theories of certain individuals - Heinrich Hübsch, Karl Bötticher, and Gottfried Semper - stand out for their instigation of this new debate between realism and idealism. In contrast to earlier writers,

who attempted to refine notions of veracity within the classical system, these strands of nineteenth century writing explicated understanding of architecture in a decidedly realist direction.

The essentially new question posed in these writings is: how can architecture be understood through an empirical investigation of history? Rather than having historical understanding conform to transcendental or logical principles, as had often been the case in the eighteenth century, the artifactual remains of the past now became the field of knowledge upon which architectural principles would be based. The historical empiricism of Hübsch, Bötticher, and Semper began investigation from the rich reservoir of observable events, be they traces of the past or direct examinations of present conditions. By regarding material facts as the core of the productive impulses of architecture, critical attention was refocused from abstract ideals to concrete entities. Ironically, although they held fast to a historical understanding of architecture, their materialistic explanation of historical meaning ultimately weakened the hold of traditional event-oriented history on design. Through an elevation of historical explanatory power on the basis of empirical understanding, the customary diachronic political and religious parameters of historical understanding were transfigured. History was described as much by the study of the long-term processes occurring within material culture as by the momentous acts of individual subjects. This strong correlation between the meaning of history and the gradual formation and organization of practical activities held great consequences for the understanding of contemporary architecture. Materialist historical explanation legitimized the nineteenth century's search to understand its building tasks on terms consonant with its own social and material conditions.

In his challenge to the orthodoxy of the Greek Revival in the 1820s, Hübsch dignified the idea of architecture as material essence, which later constituted one of the principal underpinnings of the Modern Movement. Previously subordinate to the higher

ideas of beauty, the physical aspects of architecture were raised to a position of being an end in themselves. While Hübsch's materialism was directed to medieval building styles, his inductive inferences supported a design logic independent of historical references. Likewise, although Bötticher's texts in the 1840s sought to constitute design on the eternal aspects of Greek design, he was acutely aware of architecture's constructive aspects. The ultimate legacy of Bötticher's system, therefore, was not the universality of Greek design, but the universality of technological principles. His scientific search into the collective identity of forms, their elemental substance and artistic effluence, recognized the virtues of naturalistic explanation. Lastly, Gottfried Semper's empirical approach to primitive archetypes shows the influence of Bötticher's tectonic account, and his eulogy of the foundational importance of the hearth from "which the whole layout of the house originated."⁶⁵ Semper's materialism traced the development of the industrial arts specifically to the changed social and artistic relations of a rapidly advancing capitalist society.⁶⁶ Semper reoriented the significance of ornament from exclusively moral and aesthetic meditations to an integrated image of engaged productive/social relationships. Rather than viewing ornament as augmenting more fundamental architectural realities, Semper insisted that the meaning of ornament be sought within an intricate correlation of the technologies of construction and the spiritual striving of humanity.

Neither Hübsch, Bötticher nor Semper wholly discredited either idealism or analytic, rational thought. Despite their apprehensions deductive argumentation, the notion that architectural understanding should be based on first principles was not abandoned. Centuries-old motivations to raise human thought to a spiritual plane through architecture persisted both in their writings and in those of a great many of their contemporaries. Thus, the introduction of empirical categories of understanding did not lead to the replacement of one paradigm of architectural knowledge by another. If anything, material philosophies enlarged and problematized what was becoming a

heterogeneous epistemological dialogue. For other nineteenth century writers, the materialist contribution made architectural debate more dynamic. It demanded from architectural theory either a strenuous defense of earlier ideal standards or a critical reading of the new transformative material approaches. An awareness of the fundamental contributions of these thinkers, therefore, does not diminish the individual contributions of the many other writers who were active at the time. Rather, it relates the mechanism of interpretive conflict as a governing reality of overall nineteenth century discourse.

Representing Loos Historically

From a historical point of view, the glaring substance missing in the various portrayals of Adolf Loos is precisely his relationship to this complex field of discourse on art, architecture and the practical arts in the decades leading up to his day. Although Loos began writing about architecture and *Kunstgewerbe* in the late 1890s, hardly any attention has been focused on the theoretical responses of earlier nineteenth century writers to these same issues.⁶⁷ Twentieth century architectural historiography invariably never brought Loos into deep discursive contact with those numerous nineteenth century writers whose intentions were not confined merely to narrow stylistic issues, but to the underlying questions relating to the adaptation of building to modern life. And, even though Loos has been frequently set against the straw dogs of *Historismus* and the *Secession*, the representation (by Loos and later writers) of these ideological "others" have been grossly simplified and marginalized. Given that Loos's intellectual environment within design is little understood, many questions emerge. How was Loos a part of the extensive discursive environment of nineteenth century Austria and Germany? What elements of Loos's supposed radical modernism can be traced to earlier discussions and debates? How do Loos's ideas emerge from such a conflictual interpretive environment? As the Viennese architect, and publisher of *Der Architekt*, Ferdinand Feldegg wrote in 1900: "*Die*

*grundlegenden Anfänge jedwedes culturgeschichtlichen Umschwungen liegen Jahrzehnte, selbst oft ein Jahrhundert zurück. Auch die 'moderne' ist kein Product unserer Zeit allein, sondern bloß deren Erscheinung.*⁶⁸

In short, the historiographic tradition in regard to Loos, and for that matter most architects of the modern movement, ignores the complexity of thought in the nineteenth century. To be sure, historical accounts of high modernism in architecture had us believe that the twentieth century finally adapted itself to the conditions of existence in bourgeois industrial society. Today, in the aftermath of the modernist paradigm, doubts are raised as to whether the modern ever possessed a historical finality outside of its textual representation. The uncertainty of the post-modern era calls to mind the instability of knowledge throughout the industrial age. In many respects, awareness of this contemporary uncertainty brings to mind the pre-modern era as well. It explains the severe textual distortions of nineteenth century architectural culture. It also invokes the idea that the nineteenth century was not merely a transitional era on the road to the great flowering of architectural modernism.

If nineteenth century architectural culture can be re-evaluated through an examination of its texts, so can our image of Adolf Loos, the architectural theorist. As I pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, Loos's activities at the turn of the century do not solely account for the heroic images of Loos created over the past eight decades. The heroic image of Loos is the product of his representation in texts, whether historical, critical, or of another format. What we are left with are many historical representations of Loos, and the logical impossibility of ever uncovering a real, or unitary Loos. What is possible, however, is the presentation of Loos's ideas against a new background: that of the textual environment of the nineteenth century. As such, an aim of this study is to argue that many of the theoretical and philosophical arguments relating to Loos's theory of architecture and the crafts are to be found in the textual environment of nineteenth

century art, architecture and the crafts. This corpus of writings is a neglected, but essential key to recasting Loos's relation to modernism, historicism, and a host of ideological movements. It is here that we recover the actual dialogic struggles over the conflict between architecture and industrial civilization, that struggle of ideas which paved the way for the more well-known pronouncements of the twentieth century.

This is not to claim that Loos was directly influenced by one theorist or another. It is not my intention to prove causal relationships between Loos and other writers or designers.⁶⁹ Nor am I interested in pursuing a nomological history, retracing law-like connections between Loos and his intellectual forefathers. As Hans Kellner argues: "Cause, in particular, which can be seen as merely the product of narrative structures once the world is considered as a text, is a trap, always to be questioned."⁷⁰ The content of Loos's reading is, of course, impossible to gauge. It would be misleading to confine his intellectual forbears to those present during his academic years at the K.K. Staats-Gewerbeschule in Reichenberg (Bohemia), the K.K. deutschen Staats-Gewerbeschule in Brno, and the Königlichen Sächsischen Technischen Hochschule in Dresden; or even the Akademie des bildenden Künste in Wien where he attended lectures.⁷¹ The teaching plans of these institutions of learning were customary of late nineteenth century education in Austria and Germany, and represented a wide spectrum of ideas within the prevailing tradition of *Historismus*. Furthermore, despite remnants of Loos's library at the Museum of the City of Vienna, one can never be sure of those books and articles he most profoundly took to heart. His own absence of commentary on this critical issue, as well as the lack of information as to the courses he took while studying in Vienna and Dresden, argues the need for a broad comparative approach to the textual environment.

For these reasons, I have not limited my research to texts for which there is documentary proof that Loos owned, read, quoted from, or mentioned. Such a corpus would be limiting and misleading to the extent that it would lead us to think that we can uncover

the paths of Loos's ideological genesis through the routes that he suggests himself. Rather, I have included a wide array of texts which Loos may or may not have read. The particular texts presented here are culled from a large corpus of journal articles and books concerned with architecture and the applied arts in nineteenth century Austria and Germany. Again, the reduction of such a large set of writings is predicated on the particular thematic set of ideological issues relating to Loos's own writings. For the most part, the articles and books I have chosen to contrast with Loos's texts are also concerned with coming to grips with general theoretical issues relating to architecture the practical arts. While the set of texts included here is not exhaustive of the subject, it contains a great many of the fundamental writings of the period. In addition, I have also felt compelled to widen my cast to include philosophical arguments on history and art or anthropological discussions on culture when the occasion arises. Thus, in cases relevant to Loos's particular intellectual concerns, I have addressed perspectives other than those commonly thought pertinent to architecture and the practical arts.

Historical narration of the kind I am attempting leads the reader beyond customary boundaries of understanding. It attempts to surmount both cause and effect relationships and conceptual dualities for a description of integrative cultural configurations. For Jean E. Howard, describing the goals of the New Historicism, "one of the greatest challenges facing a new historical criticism is to find a way to talk about and discriminate among the many different ways in which literature is traversed by - and produces - the ideologies of its time."⁷² I am interested in describing this state of events within the relationships between architectural writing, building, and other cultural activities. Rather than attempting to prove routes of influence, I want to describe the interrelatedness of these activities. More specifically, in situating Loos's texts alongside other texts addressing similar sets of issues, I hope to bring out dialogical conflicts and connections. In analyzing textual discourse, Foucault writes that one looks to:

how the statements may be linked to one another in a type of discourse and one tries in this way to discover how the recurrent elements of statements can reappear, dissociate, recompose, gain in extension or determination, be taken up into new logical structures, acquire, on the other hand, new semantic contents, and constitute partial organizations among themselves.⁷³

This analogical approach has the advantage of providing new horizons for the historical representation of Loos's ideas. It must be emphasized that in so doing my analyses of writing does not presume to uncover any new truths about Loos. What is more vital, I believe, is the uncovering of simplifications. Using text as artifact I hope to enrich the historical portrait of both Loos and the age of architecture into which he matured.

Notes

1. Reyner Banham, "Ornament and Crime: the decisive contribution of Adolf Loos," The Architectural Review (February, 1957), p. 88.
2. Kenneth Frampton, Modern Architecture: A Critical History (N.Y.: Oxford, 1980), p. 93. See also Dietrich Worbs, Der Raumplan. Entwicklung der Raumbildung bei Villen- und Massenwohnbauten von Adolf Loos (Stuttgart: Doctoral dissertation at Technische Hochschule, 1982).
3. Leonardo Benevolo, History of Modern Architecture, Vol 1, (Cambridge, Ma.: MIT, 1977), p. 301.
4. See Folnesics, "Das Moderne Wiener Kunstgewerbe," DKuD 5.Oct. 1899 - March 1900, p. 255. Folnesics wrote of Loos's Cafe Museum as "das handwerkliche Empfinden bei der Ausführung." p. 260.
5. Wilhelm Schölermann, "Cafe Museum" Wiener Rundschau, 1898/99, Nr. 12, in Kontroversen, Adolf Loos im Spiegel der Zeitgenossen, ed. Adolf Opel (Wien: Georg Prachner, 1985), p. 9.
6. Ludwig Hevesi, Österreichische Kunst im neunzehnten Jahrhundert (Leipzig: E.A. Seeman, 1903), p. 285.
7. Ludwig Hevesi, "Adolf Loos" (1907), in Konfrontationen, Schriften von und über Adolf Loos, ed. Adolf Opel (Wien: Georg Prachner, 1988), p. 17.
8. Julius Meier Graefe, "Ein modernes Milieu," DK 8.1901, p. 269.
9. Richard Schaukel, "Adolf Loos: Geistige Landschaft mit vereinzelter Figur im Vordergrund" Innen-Dekoration (August, 1908) in Kontroversen, p. 20.
10. Wilhelm von Wymetal, "Ein reichbegabtes Brünner Kind" (1908) in Konfrontationen, p. 22.
11. Robert Scheu, "Adolf Loos," Die Fackel, 26.June 1909, in Kontroversen, p. 25.
12. See Stanislaus von Moos, "Le Corbusier und Loos," in Raumplan versus Plan Libre, ed. Max Risselada (Delft: 1987).
13. Sigfried Giedion associated Loos's intentions with the anonymous utilitarian work characteristic of England and the United States. Space, Time and Architecture, The Growth of a New Tradition [1941] (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard, 1967), pp. 329-331. Still, Giedion devoted relatively little attention to Loos. This lack of notice was more marked in Johnsons and Hitchcocks' The International Style [1932]. Loos was completely forgotten in this textual formalization of "unornamented architecture" as an integral element of the modern movement.
14. The fact that Loos's architectural designs after 1920 did not adapt to the standards set for the new 'International Style' no doubt increased the historiographic tendency to describe him as an early modernist.
15. Adolf Loos. Das Werk des Architekten, ed. Heinrich Kulka (Wien: Anton Schroll, 1931), p. 7.
16. Ibid., p. 13.

17. Ludwig Münz & Gustav Künstler, Der Architekt Adolf Loos (Wien & München: Anton Schroll, 1964), p. 14.
18. Colin Rowe, "Mannerism and Modern Architecture" in The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa and other Essays (Cambridge, Ma.: MIT, 1976), p. 40.
19. Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin, Wittgenstein's Vienna (New York: Touchstone, 1973), p. 253.
20. James Shedel, Art and Society: The New Art Movement in Vienna, 1897-1914 (Palo Alto, 1981), p. 171.
21. Roland Schachel, "Aufgaben einer Loos-Biographie" in Adolf Loos (Wien: Graphische Sammlung Albertina, 1989), p. 26.
22. See Massimo Cacciari, "Loos e l'angelo dell'effimero" in L'Architettura, no. 310-311, 1981.
23. Aldo Rossi, "Adolf Loos, 1870-1933." Casabella Continuità 233. November, 1959.
24. See Paul Engelmann, Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein (New York, 1970); Dagmar Barnouw, "Loos, Kraus, Wittgenstein and the Problem of Authenticity" in The Turn of the Century, German Art and Literature 1890-1915 ed. Gerald Chapple and Hans Schulte (Bonn, 1983); Yehuda Safran, "The Curvature of the Spine: Kraus, Loos and Wittgenstein" in 9H, no. 4, 1982; and Colin St. John Wilson, "The Use of Play and the Play of Use" in Arkkitehti, no. 2-3, 1986.
25. Benedetto Gravagnuolo, Adolf Loos, Theory and Works, trans. C.H. Burns (N.Y.: Rizzoli, 1982).
26. Barnouw, p. 260.
27. As any brief appraisal of the historical reception of Loos would indicate, the architect's ideas have been successively reinterpreted to correspond to the given speculative definition of a particular historiographic point of view. Whereas from the 1920s to 1960 Loos was read from the vantage point of the modern movement, after 1960 he was recuperated by neo-rationalism and post-modernism.
28. Maurice Mandelbaum, History, Man and Reason: A Study in 19th-Century Thought (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1971), p. 43.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
30. Karl Löwith, Meaning in History (Chicago: Chicago, 1949), p. 18.
31. Paul Veyne, Writing History: Essay on Epistemology, trans. Mina Moor-Rivoluceri (Middletown, Ct.: Wesleyan, 1984), pp. 56-59.
32. F.R. Ankersmit, "The Dilemma of Contemporary Anglo-American Philosophy of History" in History and Theory, XXV, Beiheft, p. 2.
33. Paul A. Roth, "Narrative Explanations: The Case of History" in History and Theory, XXVII, 1. 1988, p. 5.
34. For a detailed discussion these structures of historical writing, as well as the role of literary emplotment, see Hayden White's Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in 19th Century Europe (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1978).

35. We are even told by Loos that the work of Fischer von Erlach, Schinkel, and various *Biedermeier* designers were profound influences on his thought.

36. A paraphrasing of Friedrich Meinecke by Pietro Rossi, "The Ideological Valences of 20th century Historicism," History and Theory Beiheft 14 (1985), p. 16.

37. See Arnaldo Momigliano, Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography (Middletown, Ct.: Wesleyan, 1977), p. 366.

38. The dates for both the *Biedermeier* and *Gründerzeit* vary considerably depending upon the author's orientation towards economic, social, cultural or political conditions. I have taken Robert Waissenberger's periodization at 1848 since it is the most commonly used. Ed. Robert Waissenberger, Vienna in the Biedermeier Era, 1815-1848 (N.Y., Rizzoli, 1986). But Hans Bobek and Elisabeth Lichtenberger's Wien, Bauliche Gestalt und Entwicklung seit der Mitte der 19. Jahrhundert (Graz-Köln: Hermann Boehlaus, 1966) defines the *Gründerzeit* as that period between 1840-1918. The art historical approach of Renate Wagner-Rieger's Wiens Architektur im 19. Jahrhundert (Wien: Österreichische Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1970) doesn't use *Biedermeier* or *Gründerzeit* at all, preferring the terms *Klassizismus* (1770-1830), *Romantische Historismus* (1830-1860), and *Strenge Historismus* (1850-1880).

39. See Richard Hamann, Gründerzeit (Berlin: Akademie, 1965).

40. Ludwig Hevesi, "Biedermeier und Komp" (1901), in Konfrontationen, p. 14.

41. Bobek & Lichtenberger, p. 26.

42. Renata Kassel-Mikula, "Architecture from 1815-1848" in Robert Waissenberger, ed. Vienna in the Biedermeier Era, 1815-1848.

43. Ottakar Uhl, Moderne Architektur in Wien: von Otto Wagner bis heute (Wien: Schrollverlag, 1966), p. 7.

44. In Robert Waissenberger, ed. Vienna in the Biedermeier Era, 1815-1848, p. 87.

45. Hermann Broch, Hugo von Hofmannsthal and His Time, The European Imagination, 1860-1920, trans. Michael Steinberg (Chicago: Chicago, 1984), p. 33.

46. William Johnston, Vienna, Vienna: The Golden Age, 1815-1914 (N.Y.: Clarkson N. Potter, 1981), p. 10.

47. See William McGrath, Dionysian Art and Populist Politics in Austria (New Haven: Yale, 1974).

48. Hans Mommsen, "Wien - kaiserliche Metropole und Kampfplatz politisch - sozialer Emanzipation zu Beginn der österreichischen Staatskrise" in Ornament und Askese, im Zeitgeist des Wien der Jahrhundertwende, ed. Alfred Pfabigan (Wien: Christian Brandstätter, 1985), p. 13.

49. Carl Schorske, Fin-de-Siècle Vienna, Politics and Culture (N.Y.: Vintage, 1981), p. 7.

50. Edward Timms, Karl Kraus Apocalyptic Satire, Culture and Catastrophe in Hapsburg Vienna (New Haven: Yale, 1986), p. 22.

51. See David Luft, Robert Musil and the Crisis of European Culture, 1880-1942 (Berkeley: California, 1980), p. 12.
52. Günter Dürig, "Portrait of a City-Configuration and Change," in Vienna 1890-1920, ed. Robert Weissenberger (N.Y.: Rizzoli, 1984), p. 18.
53. Hevesi, Österreichische Kunst... p. 116.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
55. A limited discussion of Loos and his age is given by Hildegund Amanshauser as part of her overall analysis of his complete textual works. See Untersuchungen zu den Schriften von Adolf Loos (Wien: Doctoral dissertation at Universität Salzburg, 1985).
56. See Victor Hugo, "Ceci tuera cela" in Notre Dame (Boston: Little Brown, 1888).
57. Elizabeth Eisenstein, Print Culture and Enlightenment Thought (Chapel Hill: North Carolina, 1986), pp. 3 & 6. See also Eisenstein, The Printing Press as an Agent of Change, Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge, 1978).
58. Lucien Febvre & Henri-Jean Martin, The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing, 1450-1800, trans. David Gerard (London: NLB, 1976), pp. 67-68.
59. See John Clyde Oswald, A History of Printing: Its Development through Five Hundred Years (N.Y.: D. Appleton, 1928); and Siegfried Steinberg, 500 Years of Printing (Baltimore: Penguin, 1960).
60. On the specific German scene see Daniel Moran, Toward the Century of Words: Johann Cotta and the Politics of the Public Realm in Germany, 1795-1832 (Berkeley: California, 1991).
61. For a discussion of the development of architectural journals in the German-speaking world see Rolf Fuhlrott, Deutschsprachige Architektur-Zeitschriften: Entstehung und Entwicklung der Fachzeitschriften für Architektur in der Zeit von 1789-1918 (München: Dokumentation, 1975), pp. 262-265. For more general coverage see also Frank Jenkins, "Nineteenth Century Architectural Periodicals," in Concerning Architecture (London: Penguin, 1968).
62. Renate Wagner-Rieger, p. 100.
63. See Maria Rennhofer, Kunstzeitschriften der Jahrhundertwende in Deutschland und Österreich, 1895-1914 (Wien, München: Christian Brandstaetter, 1987).
64. Werner Schweiger, Wiener Werkstätte: Design in Vienna, 1903-1932 (N.Y.: Abbeville, 1984), p. 14. As Schweiger also points out, "In 1898-99 new personalities took over as art critics in the most important dailies of the capital. Berta Zuckermandl joined the Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung, Hermann Bahr the Neues Wiener Tageblatt and Österreichische Volks-Zeitung, and Ludwig Hevesi, in the Fremden-Blatt, began in mid-career to take an interest in new trends in art. The most important change, however, involved the Neue Freie Presse. This conservative newspaper, which mainly recruited its readership from the nobility and upper middle classes, enlisted a 'modernist' when it brought Frank Servaes from Berlin to write for it."
65. Wolfgang Herrmann, Gottfried Semper: In Search of Architecture (Cambridge, Ma.: MIT, 1989), p. 140.

66. Harry Mallgrave, "The Idea of Style: Gottfried Semper in London," (Philadelphia: Doctoral dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania, 1983), p. 227.

67. On the history of architectural theory in the German-speaking world during the 19th century the two comprehensive texts are Klaus Döhmer, "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?" Architekturtheorie zwischen Klassizismus und Jugendstil (München: Prestel, 1976); and Valentin W. Hammerschmidt, Anspruch und Ausdruck in der Architektur des späten Historismus in Deutschland (1860-1914) (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1985). See also the introduction to Harry Mallgrave's translation of Otto Wagner, Modern Architecture (Santa Monica: Getty, 1988); and J. Duncan Berry, "The Legacy of Gottfried Semper, Studies in Späthistorismus" (Providence: Doctoral dissertation at Brown University, 1989).

68. Ferdinand Feldegg, "Über Grundlagen modernen Empfindens," Der Architekt 6.1900, p. 11.

69. The most exhaustive monograph on Loos is that of Bernhard Rukschcio & Roland Schachel, Adolf Loos: Leben und Werk (Salzburg: Residenz, 1982), pp. 15-17. The authors have included an account of his upbringing in Brno and Vienna, education, marriages, architectural practice, social life, travels, and intellectual companions.

70. Hans Kellner, "Narrativity in History: Post-Structuralism and Since," History and Theory Beiheft 16 (1987), p. 5.

71. In private discussion, Dr. Rukschcio stated that more is known ironically of Loos's stay in the United States than of his education in Wien and Dresden.

72. Jean E. Howard, "The New Historicism in Renaissance Studies" English Literary Renaissance 16.1 (Winter, 1986), p. 30.

73. Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972), p. 60.

PART II

"Piling-on of words, volcanic,
drowned by the sea's roar."¹

Paul Celan

CHAPTER 2

"IN WHICH STYLE SHOULD WE BUILD?"

Throughout the nineteenth century in the Germanic cultural sphere a craving for origins had decisive impact on cultural endeavors. The Hungarian literary critic Georg Lukacs captured the simultaneously creative and destructive forces embodied in this particularly German attitude to form:

Longing and form. They always say that Germany is the land of Sehnsucht, of longing, and German longing is so strong, they say, that it destroys all form, so overpowering that one cannot express it except by stammering. Yet people talk about it all the time, and its formlessness is constantly remoulded into a new, "higher form" - the only possible expression of its nature.²

It was a function of such longing that led German-language thinkers deep into the recesses of history. For it was here in history's complex drama, so it was widely believed, that a reconstructed heading for the future could be regained.

The pursuit of historical origins found fertile ground in architectural culture. The majority of interpretive schemes for an understanding of architecture in the nineteenth century were driven by historical thought. This concept of history had decisive impact on buildings and products. Architectural design, to an astounding degree, fathomed form and function within the metaphysical suppositions of a historical age. A relationship was generated between a scholarly understanding of the spirit of an age and an appropriate architectural appearance. As interpreters of historical culture, architects faced the problem of how cultural unity could be synthesized through the expression of buildings.

In the Vienna of Adolf Loos, the conflation of historical styles with the functional needs of the industrial city was particularly acute. Consistent with the Austrian Empire's role as bulwark of the decaying post-Napoleonic system of political alliances, the city's nineteenth century architecture arose through concepts of historical identity. As capital of

a loosely-unified Empire, Viennese architects explored historical styles in an endeavor to devise an urban environment identifiable with unity, stability and longevity, an aristocratic spirit of *Palastluft überall*.³ To some extent, they reached these goals. Upon first glance, perhaps no element of Hapsburg culture made a more lasting impression on the urban character of the lands of the former dual-monarchy than the architectural stamp of the Imperial style emanating from Vienna.

These same buildings and urban designs also cogently express the ideological indecisiveness of the nineteenth century, the heterogeneous representations of societal consciousness through the framework of individual interpretations of history. Since the nineteenth century mind wrestled with the existence of a historical world without agreeing on its contents, the identity of style altered with the scope and direction of each design inquiry. For Hermann Muthesius, the unparalleled dialectic of stylistic thinking and building in nineteenth century Europe sprang from a feeble economic and social life, which in turn created a longing for the unknown and unimaginable.⁴ For him, writing two years into the present century, the aestheticization of life during the century had become stronger as the living pulse of art had become weaker. Theorizing architecture increasingly replaced creating architecture. By reflecting consciousness in knowledge and not productive activity, a century of *Verstandesarbeit* resulted, during which the natural life of art died, and the art professor replaced the artist as the generator of architectural culture.⁵ The expansion of empirical knowledge did not grant architecture the means to a future as it did engineering, and architects turned their backs on the significance of real life. This neglect of reality, and the teeming of discursive energy around stylistic ideals of the past reflected for Muthesius a genuine poverty in the nineteenth century soul.

While Muthesius blamed ongoing eclecticism on the persistent failure of new architects to reject the old notion of the styles, Adolf Loos was also aware of a century's failed attempts to create a unified style, or a building style consistent with contemporary

needs. The historic styles, for Loos, became synonyms for the superfluous in building. In his writings, Loos spent little ink on convincing the reader that one style or another was invalid. Instead, the entire concept of the styles was invalid. Loos's confrontational tone in his texts regarding the styles, moreover, indicates that he was less interested in entering into the debate than on encouraging that writers drop the issue of the styles altogether. In 1897, as soon as Loos began to publish articles on the individual household arts, the pervasive resonance and irresoluteness of the nineteenth century debate on the styles resounded from his pages. Controversial intentions are already apparent, and his words on the styles call attention to the destructive influence of heterogeneous design frameworks. The literary tone was one of despair mixed with outrage, and Loos exclaimed: "*Und mode! Welch schreckliches wort!*"⁶

If nineteenth century architectural culture was acutely concerned that its destiny was tied to an understanding of historical styles, Loos was convinced that this preoccupation had become degenerate and harmful to architecture. For Loos, inauthenticity in architecture and the practical arts was the product of a hopeless entanglement with artificial historical connections. Architecture would be able to regain its healthy perspective only by expelling the concept of historic styles from design and writing. Loos's passionate reaction against the styles, then, was a response to not only to his perception of their falsehood, but also to his desire for their rhetorical debasement. Repulsed by the indecision and lack of agreement which accompanied writing on the styles in nineteenth century Austria and Germany, Loos viewed historical styles as nothing more than fashions. They were not organic products of a culture, and as such were to be counted among the most reprehensible representations of mankind. For Loos, the middle class preoccupation with historicist details was harmful to more than just the eye. In fact, he saw it as harmful to the cultural life and health of a nation. Since the concept of style contains within its definition a prior organization of forms around certain (arbitrary)

principles, adherence to an idea of style prohibits an empirically rational design philosophy. It prevents comfortable and sensible living.

In "Die Potemkin'sche Stadt" (1898) Loos turned his attention to the question of style within the world of architecture, and specifically those facades of bourgeois housing constructed in Vienna during the 1880s and 1890s. Here he drew his famous analogy between the canvas pasteboards used by Russian bureaucrats to convince the czarina Catherine that her cities were prospering and the splendid building creations (or deceptions) of *Ringstrasse* Vienna. Accusing Viennese architects of doing much the same by plundering the formal vocabulary of Italian Renaissance palaces for deceitful reasons, Loos moralized in broad terms that "*Die Architekten sind schuld daran, die Architekten hätten nicht so bauen sollen.*"

Loos did not blame the architects alone; apart from the lack of creativity of architects, their embrace of real estate speculators led to the construction of fake Renaissance and Baroque palaces in place of honest sober, bourgeois apartment houses. In this environment of speculation, facades are nailed to buildings in order to create the impression of grandeur, and hence rent or sell the dwellings inside for much higher prices. Some of these buildings pretend to be stone, others stucco, but as Loos points out "they are neither of these: their ornamental details, their consoles, festoons, cartouches and denticulation are nailed-on cement forms."⁸

This angry resistance to the concept of historical styles has to be understood, however, within a schematization of intellectual life at the end of the century. Discussion on historic styles of architecture dominated much of the nineteenth century, beginning in the 1820s and continuing until the 1890s. Yet, intense displeasure at the longevity of the debate on styles would have been unthinkable in the early decades to those architectural writers who had not already experienced decades of inconclusive debate on the identification of design with a particular historical age. Charges of faddishness arose from

an oppressive accumulation of rhetoric. Loos's rejection of the concept of historical styles was as much the rejection of a textual debate as it was the denial of historicist ornamental vocabulary for functional forms.

The Cultural Concept of the Styles

The content and extent of discourse on the styles was not altogether new to the modern era. It represented an intensification of a phenomenon endemic to architectural thinking; a speculative quest aimed at understanding the forms of architecture in relation to the changing relationships between different human societies. Although it has long been recognized that the stylistic debate of the nineteenth century originated in the Enlightenment, these origins are a deep part of Western history. Awareness of the diversity of architectural styles has a tradition as long as conscious awareness of different cultures. Once there was more than one formal source of architectural knowledge, the idea of the styles was born. The concept of the styles parallels awareness of cultural relativism, and the explication of one style as paramount among others expresses the long-standing need to suppress the awareness of relativism through monotopic cultural identification.

To varying degrees, ever since Alexander's conquests of the Ancient Near East, architecture in the West had acquired its societal authority through identification with what were considered the true sources of knowledge about building in antiquity: the architectural ideas of classical Greece. For the Hellenistic Greeks, awareness of the values of the traditional *Polis* meant extending the range of the sources for architectural authority beyond the local landscape and needs. Greek culture was imported to foreign soils, and re-created by foreign workers for a mixed Greek and native population. For the Romans, long familiar to Greek architecture in southern Italy and Sicily, importation of the Greek style was a more conscious (if not uncontested) affair. Likewise, subsequent representations of antiquity by western cultures (primarily the Roman during the Middle Ages and early

modern era) occurred because the particular contemporary society felt a need to structure its own creations amidst an act of historical identification. The acts of identification (with antiquity) and denial (of local differences) associated with style were integral features of the development of Western architecture.

Attempts to restrict awareness of cultural and morphological differences were integral to the various historical justifications for the classical architectural style during the centuries after the Middle Ages. The full weight of the idea of a universal classical style was felt during the Italian Renaissance "discovery" of antiquity.⁹ Throughout Western Europe, the bulk of writings on architecture after Alberti restricted their scope to commentaries on classical concepts of architecture such as symmetry, eurhythmy, and propriety, and the correct proportions of the columnar orders, the formal system most expressive of the architectural syntax of antiquity.

During the three and a half centuries from Brunelleschi to the French Revolution, a corpus of Roman buildings and the sole surviving classical text on architecture, Vitruvius' De architectura, provided a privileged domain of inquiry into antiquity. The text provided semantic authority within architecture culture. Filiation to Vitruvius's treatise oriented architectural design to a framework of deductive reasoning, and anchored innovation to the axioms contained within the collected knowledge of pre-Augustan antiquity. The Vitruvian text therefore is as interesting for what it omits as for what it includes. Vitruvius made short discussion of arches, living long before the remarkable achievements in vaulting by the post-Hadrianic Romans. That the Vitruvian text should become the image of architecture in antiquity for post-Renaissance architects represented a delimitation of building knowledge. By the same token, a semi-religious acceptance of the text dissuaded European architectural theorists from an analysis of the fundamental principles underlying the classical system.¹⁰ Such inquiry was not consonant with the monologous spirit of

classical theory. These conditions led to four centuries of architectural writing of an exegetical (if strongly interpretive) rather than speculative nature.

Given the vast growth of knowledge during the Enlightenment, and the concurrent development of scientific reasoning, the authority of classical architectural theory weakened. For the late seventeenth and eighteenth century mind, striking epistemological questions on the nature of classical architectural principles - most often proportion - replaced the earlier emphasis on decorum.¹¹ This transformation was closely related to the philosophical enshrinement of empirical tools of research, and geographic and temporal expansion of the limits of knowledge. Fundamentally, the transmutation of discourse in the treatise tradition resulted from two interrelated factors: a sustained inquiry into the logically consistent applications of the existing classical vocabulary, and a continually expanding corpus of buildings functioning as classical exemplars. In the first case, one of the distinguishing features of this new mentality was a search to discover the true function and appearance of the columnar orders. What makes the contrast between this new Enlightenment attitude and its Renaissance predecessor particularly telling is that the previously deductive preoccupation with proportions based upon treaties, Roman buildings, a theory of numbers, ideal geometries, musical ratios, and the human body was transformed into an inductive inquiry into the ever-widening range of actual possibilities.¹² Secondly, an equally significant development was the visual discovery of Greek and previously unknown Roman architecture during the eighteenth century, an event which provided evidence of a potentially far larger field of formal exemplars of classicism.¹³ The discovery of Greece stimulated a new stage in the conveyance of classical authority, and a great interest by the early nineteenth century for the archaic forms (principally the Greek Doric, but also the Ionic order) of classicism.

Achieving a universal style of architecture based on antiquity was more difficult for northern Europeans than Italians. North of the Alps, in lands either marginally controlled

by Rome or never visited by the legions, the repression of local building traditions by classical theory was much less enduring and successful. In Austria and Germany, the Renaissance arrived quite late. Hence, the Greek Revival followed only a century after the earlier great flowering of antiquity, the already transformed revival of Roman architecture known as the Central European Baroque. As during the prior Baroque age, Greek architectural forms were adapted to the peculiar semantics of the Austrian and German cultural climates. classical Greek forms, however, were quite foreign to Austrian and German eyes. Their differences from the Italian Renaissance grammar of architecture, moreover, boldly put into question the idea of a universal classical style. Exemplified by Langhans's Brandenburg Gate (1789) in Berlin and Peter von Nobile's Burgtor (1821-24) in Vienna, the Germanic Greek Revival repeated even less the ancient principles of Attic classicism than had the Italian Renaissance those of ancient Rome. More forcefully than during the Renaissance, the forms of Greek architecture were understood by Austrians and Germans as a historical style particularly suited to their own needs, and not universal style appropriate for all peoples. With the claim of Germany as the inheritor of Attic classicism, the idea of historical styles was strengthened. In consequence of a radically different cognition of societal essence and the grounds of historical identity, the appraisal of Greece by the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century architectural mind actually propelled architecture away from antiquity and towards the modern.¹⁴

As far as the nineteenth century idea of style is concerned, a salient feature of the Greek Revival was the birth of modern archaeology and art history. Historical and archaeological investigation, as nineteenth century texts, drawings and reconstructions make evident, became the preferred means of explanation for Western man's ever-more complex explanation of himself. While these new endeavors were originally carried out in the name of classicism and universal knowledge, their expansive inquiry actually led to the demise of the centuries-old tradition of writing architectural treatises. In the same vein,

the increasing need to account for differences in the writing of history weakened earlier belief in the unity of human culture. An exponential increase of knowledge about antiquity mandated much greater historical explanation of the unity of the classical tradition. As the sources and explanations for the universal classical style multiplied, its coherence became more difficult to prove. The great efforts of nineteenth century historians in Austria and Germany are a testament to the pressing need felt by nineteenth century society to prove the existence of a great historical unity extending over the centuries.¹⁵

Art historians from Karl Schnaase to A.Springer looked to historical building styles as the formal languages expressing the soul of a people, age or land; the idea of styles as expressions of a spiritual *Zeitgeist*.¹⁶ A historicist frame of mind adapted history to function and function to specific ideas of historical styles. The importance of historical thinking for the nineteenth century debate on the styles cannot be overstated. Within architectural culture, the production of historical texts on the styles coincided with increasing doubts about the unity of human culture. Writing history was stimulated by a need for cultural explanation and identification. While pre-modern writers were aware of a historical continuum connecting them with antiquity, the existence of this continuum was taken for granted. Such could no longer be the case by the nineteenth century. Given the enormous amount of information about the past available to the moderns, both the ultimate sources of historical knowledge and their internal interconnectedness became less clear as time went on.

The nascent relativism of Claude Perrault at the end of the seventeenth century was magnified by the end of the eighteenth century into comprehensive explorations into different historical periods, as exemplified by the Greek Revival and Gothic Revival. Thus, at the same time as the Greek Revival, interest also turned to the Gothic Age of building. As in the case of the Greek Revival, attempts were made at first to understand the Middle Ages from the vantage point of Renaissance classicism. Architectural texts, like Batty

Langley's Ancient Architecture Restored and Improved (1742), even went as far as to introduce Gothic vocabulary into classical syntax and interpretive categories.¹⁷ Soon enough, however, the ideas for the Gothic was connected by romantic writers to entirely different notions. As we shall see below, during the nineteenth century, writers undertook philosophically heterogeneous investigations into an ever-widening array of historical styles. In these texts, great attempts were made to demonstrate how the forms of buildings could be transposed to the workings of history.

In Defense of the Classic

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Alois Hirt opened up a probing stylistic and historical inquiry on that architectural reality known as classicism. Hirt, who had studied architectural history in Rome from 1782-96, became professor of classical antiquities at the University of Berlin in 1796, and was a major theoretical exponent of architecture in Prussia during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. In the prolegomena to his Die Baukunst nach den Grundsätzen der Alten (1809), he posed the essential ontological problem for architecture: what was the driving inspiration of people before ours for creating architecture, and how do we respond to that? In setting parameters for our experience of architecture, he asked a series of questions which would become standards for subsequent discussions:

"Welche Völker trieben vor uns die Baukunst? Wo finden wir ihre Wiege? Wie war ihr allmähliges Fortschreiten? Wann und wo der Zeitpunkt ihrer Vollendung? Wenn und durch welche Ursachen ward ihre Ausartung, und endlich ihr Verfall herbeigeführt? Wie war ihr Zustand in den finstern Jahrhunderten des Mittelalters? Wann, durch welche Veranlassungen, und durch wen begann des Wiederaufleben der neuen Kunst? Und wie ward sie seitdem bis auf unsere Tage betrieben?"¹⁸

Although these questions could be used as the basis for a broad historical inquiry, Hirt immediately presumed the architecture of Greece and Rome as the definitive source of architectural knowledge, the former state of architectural perfection. Characteristically, he

was anxious about the reasons for the fall from classical perfection, and, even more importantly, the possibilities for renewal along classical lines.

Hirt's inherent interest for us lies in the fact that his argument on the movement away from classical perfection is framed as a historical investigation to recover the principles of design.¹⁹ Perhaps as a result, Hirt proposed neither to imitate classical prototypes nor to accept literally Vitruvius's doctrines. Rather, classical sources are understood as a source of knowledge from which creative decisions are made. Out of such an *Erkenntnisquelle*, presumably, one can develop a series of architectural laws which correspond to the ideal potentialities - embodied in classicism - of the art of architecture.²⁰ Likewise, Hirt's empiricism assumed that induction of principles from a profusion of forms is more important than the forms themselves. The search for absolute ideological authority in architectural laws takes precedence. *"Man sammelte diese Erfahrungen und Entdeckungen und zog davon Lehren, Gesetze und Regeln ab."*²¹ In his search for enduring laws and adherence to coherent principles, Hirt worried about an architectural culture that:

"fehlt jener Geist, der das Ganze, und zwar in allen seinen größern und kleinern Theilen, nach Regeln und Grundsätzen ordne, und so dem Gebäude der Baukunst, welches die Alten aufführten, aber durch die Zeit wieder in ein Chaos verfallen ist, unter uns wieder eine fest Begründung und Base gebe."²²

As indicated above, a trait of the nineteenth century architectural thought was the conviction that truth was a product of invention and experience in regard to historical forms. It took, as we will see, the form of an inventive experiential analysis of the past to synthesize a historical relevance for the present. Thus, a paradoxical relationship between invention and experience was at the basis of ensuing stylistic debate. Both strategies partook of inductive reasoning and the logical problems that accompany this endeavor. The arbitrariness entailed in the choice of the sources of experience and the capricious degree to which bits of experience are inductively modeled into hard and fast rules for

design had great bearing on the flexibility advocated for creative design. It is this paradox in the early decades of the nineteenth century that determined the makeup of the profusion of styles. As we shall see, the romantic movement at the beginning of the century sought an intense balance of individual creativity with structural, material and constructive honesty.

In propagating a debate on the stylistic principles of design, Hirt and subsequent theorists of architecture were sowing ground broken over a century earlier. A search for secure principles of design had been vigorously undertaken in the French Enlightenment during the seventeenth century. German-language writers were clearly aware of the revolutionary developments occurring in France. In his essay "On German Architecture" (1773) Johann Wolfgang von Goethe explicitly responded to Marc-Antoine Laugier and the promise of logically deducing all architectural form from a set of rigid axioms.²³ In this early challenge to the classical paradigm, Goethe was strident in pointing out that rules are more damaging to genius than examples.²⁴ All creativity would be inhibited and architecture would become a mechanical operation.

Yet, while condemning Laugier for the supposed arbitrariness and rigidity of his contention for the primitive hut, Goethe appealed at the same time for functional and artistic relevance in design. In his praise of Gothic architecture, Goethe emphasized the idea of necessary shapes whose arbitrary sizes were elevated artistically: that which was necessary was made beautiful.²⁵ Ironically, Goethe's impression of the artistic effects of Gothic piers sounds akin to Jean Louis de Cordemoy's judgment of the column's aesthetic functionalism, its simplicity and structural boldness. Cordemoy's investigation of the structural principles of Gothic architecture - his condemnation of the mixing of pilasters with walls - was a revolutionary appeal for a method of design based upon rigid principles, and not imitative adherence to tradition.²⁶ Whereas Goethe objected to Laugier's over-

emphasis on unchanging precepts, he was swayed by the powerful expression of simple and structural forms deduced from such principles.

As Goethe's argument foreshadows, the Gothic and Greek revivals would be temporary, as would all succeeding revivals. To give an example, it was not Greece - and its trabeated temples - that mattered to architectural theorists in the end, but rather how identification with Greece (or another land) could form the basis for a philosophy of design. How, for instance, could a longing for truth in the present be theoretically constructed from an affiliation with the past? Could historical building forms become bearers of contemporary meanings? Through nineteenth century longings, historical styles would serve as metaphors for what was seen as appropriate social consciousness. Thus, the need for stylistic identification was much more of a social than a building question. By the early nineteenth century, building types were foremost determined from contemporary structural and functional considerations, and the mantle of stylistic identification had become a supplementary concern.

Perhaps for this reason, architectural writers adopted a concern for the functional and structural principles of Greek classicism. This explanation of the classical through reference to new sources of knowledge was a hallmark of early nineteenth century writings on Greek architecture. It is precisely a concern for principles, an awareness of the discrepancy between appearance and performance, that is illustrated by J.H. Wolff's 1834 attempt to articulate classical ways of building. For Wolff, a professor of architecture in Kassel, the central stylistic problem regarding Greek, Roman and other historical periods was conformity to necessity, and exclusion of arbitrariness. In his aesthetic of architecture, the few extant exemplars of Greek architecture are praised for their supposed conformity to this principle:

weil einerseits unsere Bildung mit zu vielen Fäden an der des Alterthums hängt, im einen völlig eigenen Weg einschlagen zu können, anderseits aber, weil kein Zeitalter und keine Nation eine Bauweise in ihrer Art so rein und

vollkommen durchgebildet hat, dass sie sich neben die classische Vorbilder zu stellen oder diese zu verdrängen vermöchte.²⁷

Nonetheless, for Wolff the perfect purity of ancient Greece is saturated with functional and constructive problems. Throughout, the key issue raised is the importance of not only looking at the previous models of antiquity, but expanding what would be a decidedly scientific inquiry to all of the fine arts, nature and technological processes. The striving for perfection corresponds not to formal imitation, but to logical consistency of form and function.²⁸ Greek ornamental features are understood as representations of structural and functional processes: triglyphs as the visible heads of stone beams.

The importance given to explaining a set of principles underlying the classical style similarly led Karl Bötticher to analyze Greek architecture from structural principles, which like those of Cordemoy, are strongly indebted to an increased knowledge of the structural components of Gothic design. Bötticher, originally a romantic like Schinkel, devoted his earliest writings to medieval churches in Germany. Schinkel's turn to the classic strongly influenced Bötticher, and the latter devoted most of his career, which included a professorship at the Bauakademie and Kunstakademie in Berlin, to the study of antiquity.

In his article comparing medieval and classical design, "*Das Prinzip der hellenischen und germanischen Bauweise*" (1846), Bötticher contended that styles are too often compared on the basis of surface characteristics, and without regard for their essence. By "essence", Bötticher meant that set of static principles and material relations which arises out of the interaction of architecture's artistic aims and the demands of the differentiated physiognomy of all building methods. Thus, the origins of all special *Bauweise* occurs: "*nur in der Erwirkung eines neuen statischen Kraftprincipes aus der Materie beruhe, welches allein die Bildung eines neuen Raumdeckensystems möglich macht und hiermit zugleich die einer neuen Kunstformenwelt hervorruft.*"²⁹

Integral to Bötticher's thinking was that the ornamental forms of a building correspond to the constructive system. Otherwise the expression of style is fully without

meaning. The importance of Greek architecture for Bötticher lay in what he saw as its singular union of functional and artistic building elements into a work of architecture. Unlike the Egyptians, for instance, the Greeks were able to combine their artistic symbols with the static systems of their temples. *"Den Hellenen allein ist der Gedenke eigen, nicht bloss die materielle statische Leistung jedes Baugliedes, sondern auch noch die gegenseitige Verknüpfung aller Glieder zur Einheit eines Systems, durch analoge Formen bildlich vergleichend vor Augen zu stellen."*³⁰ Bötticher's book, Die Tektonik der Hellenen (1846), was less interested in proposing Greek architecture as a style for the present age, than in demonstrating how architecture in general is to be understood from its interior spaces: its inner arrangement and outfitting, the statics and organization of supports.

The Medieval Interlude

Bötticher was by no means the only writer of his time to mix Greek and Gothic principles, or to demand constructive relevancy. His inquiries into the static systems of buildings would have been impossible without those methodological advances made in previous decades. These advances, however, were made largely at the expense of the restrictive grammar once accorded to the classical language of architecture. It was in the late 1820s, partly as a result of the growing discrepancy between scholarly advances in the knowledge of antiquity and scientific progress in contemporary building practice, that revived interest in medieval architectural vocabularies and building practices began in earnest. In France, Jacques Ignace Hittorff's struggle to establish the importance of color in classical architecture profoundly changed the nature of the Greek and Roman revivals, since they were based upon a conception that the ancient temples were monochromatic.³¹

An early leader of the anti-classical tendency in Germany was Heinrich Hübsch, whose book In welchem Stile sollen wir bauen? (1828) revolutionized architectural theory of the 1830s and 1840s.³² A student of Friedrich Weinbrenner in Karlsruhe, he later became

a building official and Professor of architecture in that city. Hübsch eventually turned against his teacher's strict classicism, and his first book Über griechische Architektur (1825) argued against the orthodoxy of the Greek Revival as represented by Weinbrenner, Gilly and Hirt.

Inspired by the romantic enthronement of man as the center of speculative idealization, Hübsch envisioned an enlightenment in German design which propounded material progress. From the start, he contested the belief in forms as absolute in themselves, thus challenging the timelessness of antique forms, the orders and their decorative schemes. Rather, form can only be absolutely understood in its relation to man, and specifically his physical comfort. As the form of a building is essentially biographical of the social world, architects need to design with today's needs foremost in mind. By refusing the classical vocabulary and the long-standing spiritual empathy with tradition, and basing design upon a material evaluation of needs, Hübsch substantially transformed the terms of debate on architectural style.

Although, as we have seen, earlier theorists were preoccupied with the principles underlying design, and were often strongly critical of the stagnant imitation of antique models, their inquiries had in most cases accepted the essential validity of the classical vocabulary for contemporary man. Classicism was to be explained using the new methodological approaches made possible by historical and scientific studies. These explanations, moreover, were meant to improve upon recent attempts to build in the classical tradition. They strove to reinvigorate a pure state of classicism. Thus, in writing about columns, Hübsch, like Bötticher, stressed their function of bearing perpendicularly positioned loads. Nevertheless, he did not philosophize further about the column's historically evolved decorative scheme. To the contrary, the functioning of the columns is now looked at from the exclusive vantage point of present needs. Much more important

than the decorative choice for the capital, or even the spacing of the drums, are the demands of the ground plan:

Können zwei ganz verschiedenen verzierte Capitals für dieselbe Säule gleich schön sein, und selbst die Größe derselben ist, obgleich weniger gleichgültig, doch nicht so wichtig, als etwas die Entfernung der Säulen von einander, und diese ist endlich immer noch nicht so wichtig, als die Grundgestalt des ganzen Gebäudes.³³

Hübsch tells us that the principal concern for the architect is the building's intended use, its purpose as a house of God, a school, assembly hall, or private house. Yet, while acknowledging the subjective nature of individual taste in creating spaces in light of perceived functions, Hübsch admitted that his concern does not lie with specialized building types. Rather, he wanted to explore the generalizable form, and how such a given space must be sheltered from the elements.

Recognizing style as largely the result of material and constructive relations, Hübsch believed that the style for our time must arise out of material conditions:

erstens aus unserem gewöhnlichen Baumaterialie, zweitens aus dem heutigen Standpunkte der technostatischen Erfahrung, drittens aus der Art von Beschützung, welche die Gebäude in unserem Klima für sich selbst der Dauerhaftigkeit wegen aussprechen, und viertens aus der allgemeineren Eigenschaft unserer Bedürfnisse, die in dem Klima, vielleicht auch zum Theil in der Cultur begründet sind.³⁴

Here is introduced the notion of *Gestaltungselemente*. These elements, perceived as the objective constraints on a generalized creation, relate to human comfort and needs, and are principally climate and materials. Climate, first of all, determines wall thickness, the degree of glazed surface, and the type of roof. Secondly, cultures must use those materials which were easily available, and henceforth architecture in Germany must partake of the abundant wood and stone.

Consequently, for Hübsch, building in Germany must correspond to its unique *Gestaltungselemente* or be false. In ancient Greece, buildings had been true to their climate and materials. Yet, Hübsch felt that architecture from Alexander's day onward showed a great weakening of its sense for naturalistic preference for *Gestaltungselemente*.

To put it simply, this decline of architecture began when architects ceased to pay attention to local conditions. The suppression of difference, in other words, led to the decline of architecture. Consequently, Hübsch felt that the marble temples of Greece are appropriate to neither Germany's local materials (which Hübsch claims are sandstones, other light stones, and brick) nor climate (which mandates a much greater roof slope than in the south): nor, presumably, are the single-storied courtyard buildings of Italy. Due to the frequently cold and rainy climate of Germany, people spend more time indoors than in the Mediterranean region. The dark northern skies warrant the infusion of greater amounts of light into buildings. Because of this observation, Hübsch encouraged large windows, few exterior halls which would block light from the main halls, and numerous stories.³⁶ An increase in height is favored because vertically aligned buildings receive greater amounts of light for each room than their horizontally aligned counterparts. The vertical alignment of buildings, due to these climactic factors, is the rationale for Hübsch's choice of the *Rundbogenstyl* as that building style most appropriate to Germany. Hübsch preferred arches to trabeation, to begin with, because they were functionally more accommodating to a varied, asymmetrical composition.³⁶ Only the arches and vaults of the *Rundbogenstyl*, furthermore, would allow the large window openings required by the northern climate. Finally, Hübsch preferred the round arch to the pointed arch of the Gothic age since the former more clearly expressed the climactic influences of Germany. He inferred that the steep incline of the Gothic roof was more a consequence of spiritual values than material needs since the commonly metal-clad Gothic roofs could functionally be very flat.³⁷

Hübsch's overall objective was to convince the reader that the form of a building must be foremost a response to climate and materials and not to abstract metaphysical suppositions. While material considerations had played a prominent role in architectural theories since the Renaissance, they assumed dominant values in Hübsch's theory. Yet, by replacing what he saw as the intangible values of the classical tradition with the hard and

fast corporealities of the Romanesque, Hübsch did more than supplant one style by another. Material analyses of need, as the history of nineteenth century architecture has shown us, led not so much to the acceptance of a single appropriate style, but to a wide-ranging debate on the relative importance of material and spiritual considerations in architectural design.

Daring and forthright, Hübsch's materialist explanation was not accepted by most of his contemporaries. His resistance to the classical vocabulary and interest in the supposedly Germanic qualities of the Middle Ages, however, had much greater resonance. The writings of the period after Hübsch vividly express the newly-born classical-medieval dualism, and a polarization between aesthetic and practical considerations became pronounced.³⁸ Whereas the classical had been defined through rational organization, and the perfection of its harmonic massing, the Medieval was often seen from the vantage point of a "*mystisch-überwältigenden Gesamteindruck*."³⁹ In contrast to the cosmopolitan identity of an expansive Western culture offered by the classical, the Medieval also took on the hues of localized Germanic culture. During the 1840s and 1850s, a rich architectural debate emerged on the relevancy of the 'Germanized' Middle Ages for the German-speaking world of the nineteenth century.⁴⁰ For the most part, this debate discretely accepted material concerns while accentuating what became a struggle to express the Germanic soul in building.

Distrust with what he saw as a lifeless mechanism in recent architectural theory led Rudolf Wiegmann, an architect and Professor of architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Dusseldorf after 1839, to his investigations on the inner essence of the architectural art. His "*Gedanken über die Entwicklung eines zeitgemäßen nationalen Baustyls*" (1841) is one of the earliest texts in the German-language literature on architecture to approach design from a theory of ideas. Wiegmann responded perhaps negatively to what he saw as excesses in Hübsch's materialism and positively to Hübsch's reorientation of design from

the vocabulary of classicism to medieval *Bauweise* and the Romanesque arch. Accordingly, Wiegmann took great pains to reorient architectural theory from the sober technical side of architecture to its spiritual expression in ideas of form.

As a result of his path to the intangible side of architectural expression, Wiegmann looked first and foremost to sacred buildings. It was here after all that he felt architects had diverged most radically from the excessive economy of design. Churches and temples are the most faithful visual countenance of the *Gefühlsrichtung* of a people. They are thus an ideal model for the developmental course which architecture should take in our time. Wiegmann did not want architects to look to all sacred buildings of the past. The arbitrary choice of models from all epochs of history had led to the contemporary state of eclecticism which he so deplored. *Dieser Eklektizismus hat nun eine Verwirrung in diese Kunst gebracht, deren Ende kaum abzusehen ist...*⁴¹ Eclecticism leads only to a concern for *Mode*, or what Wiegmann also calls the Babylonian mishmash of modern architecture. It can never result in a true art.

Like the English social theorists (e.g., Pugin), Wiegmann located the malaise of contemporary architecture in society at large. It is a product of the fragmentation of the rudiments of our traditional social life. It seemed for Wiegmann a given that art will mirror societal fragmentation; since our age *"eine zerrissene, gährende und in vielen Rücksichten negierende sei - auch unsere Kunst, und namentlich unsere Baukunst zerissen, ausdruckslos und willkürlich bleiben müsse..."*⁴² Consequently, the greatest goal an architect can have is to correct the treason of these confusing times.

Arguing that our cultural condition is essentially different from that of the pre-Christian world, Wiegmann held that contemporary art must therefore deviate from that of Greece and Rome. Scholarly attempts to build in the Greek style are doomed to failure since the Greek mentality is completely foreign to our own. The introduction of Christianity forever changed the fundamental character of art, inclining toward the

intangible and away from an understandable form.⁴³ It gave art a new impulse, enriching the geometric forms of classical antiquity with the spirit of subjectivity, that which had been dragged down for so long by the objectivity of the classical mind. Even the functional form of Greek temples, enclosing only a very small space, is unsuited to our needs. Churches take in thousands.⁴⁴

Like Hübsch, Wiegmann sought for answers in the era of the Middle Ages, and to some extent, encouraged a return to its general building ways: *"Demnoch müßte unser Kirchenstyl, sowohl dem Ausdruck als der Konstruktion nach, entweder dem romanischen oder dem Spitzbogenstyl nahe kommen."*⁴⁵ Both styles have their advantages, but Wiegmann preferred the Romanesque. The Gothic, since it was interrupted by the Renaissance, could be a logical place to reconnect with the spirit of the Middle Ages. He rejected this approach, however, because the Gothic as a style reached a state of formal perfection. Any attempts to recreate it, and some have been attempted, would result in copying. The Romanesque, although further removed from us in time, was never perfected as a building style. Great experiments were made in the 14th century without conclusive results.

*Was einfach, zweckmäßig, wahr und ohne Künstlei möglich war, hatte man allmählig verachten gelernt; - man hatte das Alles in den vielversprechenden Anfängen des Rundbogenstyls im dreizehnten Jahrhundert verlassen. Die Elemente jenes Bogenstyls sind aber so vernunftgemäß, unserem Material, Klima und Bedürfnisse so angemessen, wie keine anderen, und haben sich noch nicht ausgelebt. Aus ihnen erhoben sich schon Werke von hohem Kunstwerthe für jene Zeit, und es dürften in der Folge bei weiterer Entwicklung und unter der Herrschaft eines durch die Antike geläuteretn Geschmacks noch weit vollkommenerere daraus erblühen.*⁴⁶

Thus, the Romanesque holds both the potential for a reinvigoration of spiritual values in design, and the robust formal vocabulary for new, inventive creations.

Another article of the title "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen" (1844) by the German architect Rosenthal, was concerned with the totality of spiritual concepts.⁴⁷ Rosenthal immediately admitted that his was not a new question, but as such is the proper

Lebensfrage of contemporary art. At first, echoing Hübsch, Rosenthal wrote that only the purposeful can be beautiful. In analogous fashion, he proclaimed the Gothic as the preferred style once again because contemporary man has comparable building needs, uses the same materials, and lives in an identical climate. The societal destination of architecture means that buildings must fit in with the physical and geographical landscape of a culture.⁴⁸ Gothic (and not Romanesque) architecture is fitting for the present age, Rosenthal maintained, because it corresponds to these material conditions, but even more importantly, meets the essential spiritual side of our lives.⁴⁹

Thus, unlike Hübsch or Wiegmann, Rosenthal strongly based his assessment of what is purposeful, of what style is relevant for the present age, on the religious life and inner being of the German people.⁵⁰ For a Christian people such as our own only the Gothic style is appropriate: *"Es kann nur Einen Baustyl geben, der für uns am angemessensten ist; es kann, aus einem höhern Gesichtspunkte betrachtet, nur Einen Baustyl geben, der überhaupt dem Schönen in der Baukunst auf dem geradesten Wege entgegenführt..."*⁵¹ We read that the purpose of architecture is to express a collective societal will and evoke feelings for this societal Bestimmung: *"Die Baukunst will also das innere Sein und den Zweck eines Gebäudes durch seine äussere Gestaltung dem Gefühle offenbaren."*⁵² We must not subjectively ask which style should we build in. Rather, we must always build in that style which corresponds to the character of our people.⁵³

The contrast of antiquity and the Middle Ages, which by now had become a required section of an architectural text, posits the nature of the ethereal German spirit. Obviously influenced by Hegel's teleology of the spirit, Rosenthal wrote that Greek architecture was contrarily oriented to the senses and nature, to a feeling of libertine beauty which derived from the motionless harmony of weights and supports. Gothic architecture, in antithesis, derives its sense of balance from the much more expressive tension between stresses. Such a *Gegeneinanderstreben von Kräften* invariably strives

toward eternity through the excitement of higher spiritual feelings. For Rosenthal, following the theoretical tradition of the picturesque, it follows that the simplicity and uniformity of the Greek style is not appropriate to the striving spirit of the present 'Christian' epoch, whose concept of beauty accents the endless movement of man toward God.

In attempting to prove the metaphysical differences between Greek and Gothic architecture, Rosenthal fitted intervening historical styles to an evolutionary developmental sequence. Like other architectural theorists of the nineteenth century, he viewed history as capable of furnishing us with examples from which to draw rules and avoid failures. We are given the impression that Roman architecture, although pagan in origin, possesses the rudimentary forms which will eventually give rise to Christian expression. These forms, the arch and vault, are cultivated in both Byzantine and Romanesque design which are possessed by the new spirit of Christianity. Nonetheless, although these latter styles express the striving of the spirit through their massing, Rosenthal viewed their overall forms and decorative details as ungraceful.

Gothic, or what is frequently referred to as the *germanische Baustyl*, conclusively symbolizes the dominance of form over mass, of spirit over material. The irregularity and sublime power of its forms forsook objective criteria of cognition, and inspired man's inner soul. Rosenthal was explicit: "*Die christlichen Germanen rangen mit aller Kraft eines innigen Gemüthes nach der höhern geistigen Schönheit: daher die reiche Mannigfaltigkeit, das lebendige Streben in germanischen Baustil...*"⁶⁴ In so examining the Gothic, he concluded that it matches the religious and personal character of our time. Hence, how can we find a better expression of our spirit: "*wer gewahrt das kräftige Streben jener Bogen und Gewölbe, jener Strebepfeiler und Strebebogen, beherrscht vom Gleichgewichte und sich auflösend in ein mächtiges harmonisches Emporstreben aller Massen und Formen.*"⁶⁵ Lastly, Rosenthal believed in the robustness of Gothic principles for future design. We are

told that since the German style was cut off by the Renaissance in its prime, the Gothic never achieved its consummate state. Only the present age, presumably, possesses that opportunity.

It is evident that during this time, the state of affairs in architectural theory had become increasingly divisive. Twenty years earlier, the Greek paradigm still reigned supreme. By the 1840s, in Central Europe more architects were turning their investigative gaze to northern Europe's medieval past. Yet, despite widespread interest, shared agreement about what constituted the authentic history of the Austrian and German Middle Ages was hard to come by. As the preceding discussion has shown, during the decade, explanations were particularly liberal in their interpretation of historic forms. As was the case earlier in the classical tradition, appreciation for medieval building ways led to a large number of methodological frameworks and an even larger number of approaches to design. With the introduction of numerous medieval styles alongside those of the ongoing Greek (and other classical) revivals, any integration of architectural behavior under unitary principles seemed hopeless.

A year after Rosenthal's essays promoting Gothic principles appeared, G. Palm's Von welchen Principien soll die Wahl des Baustyls, insbesondere des Kirchenbaustyls geleitet werden? (1845) explicitly recognized the dangers of the bewildering array of building styles of his time. Here, he echoed the widely held sentiment that architects abstract from a wide range of styles, and arbitrarily combine preferred elements from those different styles.⁵⁶ Recognizing that the continued application and mixture of historical styles only weakens architecture's hold on the imagination of contemporary man, Palm held that architects must be conscious of the character of their own time.

As in earlier theories, the call for accommodation to one's time finally embodied a deeper search to define the intrinsic character of architectural needs. As had been demanded time and time before, Palm blamed inconsistencies in style on the same mistake:

that of architects occupying themselves with the appearance of beauty and ignoring its true essence. Yet, unlike Hübsch, for whose system Palm was evidently quite familiar, Palm did not want to emphasize technical grounds. Rather, he called for a harmonious correspondence between character and form: "*Nur die Form ist zu billigen, welche ihm angemessen ist, denn sie soll die Außenseite des Inneren sein, die sichtbare Erscheinung der dem Gebäude zu Grunde Liegende Idee, wie die Physiognomie der geistigen Ausdruck einer Person darstellt.*"⁶⁷ Architects must, in other words, create forms which are suited to the use of the building, and the role of buildings in society.

Palm's intended correspondence between built form and societal character is one of the earliest formulations of a theory of eclecticism. As far as styles of the past are concerned, Palm was not in any conclusive sense against their use. He was only opposed to their use in inappropriate situations, those cases in which historic forms do not correspond to contemporary character. As a result, historic styles are to be understood with reference to their historical social context, so as to become experiential exemplars for the present day. Each contemporary actualization of a style represents a selective inquiry into the use of that building type in history, and a judgment of the appropriateness of those findings for the needs of the current building program.

Most of Palm's rhetorical efforts distinguish what he considered to be the two great building styles of the past: the Greek and the German Gothic. These two styles represented the antipodes of material and spiritual values. If we first look into the Antique style, Greek love for earthly beauty underlies an understanding of the architectural forms of all Hellenic building types; such as the temple, or more importantly, the theater. Palm considered that the character of Greek buildings always manifested a beauty which itself was defined and bounded by the horizons of terrestrial life, in both its physical and mental faculties. Given his reading of the Greek concept of beauty, it may be said that Palm attempted to understand the present-day character of a whole range of

building types with reference to their origins in ancient Greece or commonalities with the Greek mind: *"eignet sich auch der griechische Styl zumal für alle solche Bauten, die der Kunst und der Wissenschaft, so wie einer heitern, geistigen Lebensfreude gewidmet sind, wie z.b. für Theater, Odeen, Akademien, Gymnasien, Kunst-Museen."*⁶⁸ The repertoire for buildings in the classical style does not solely consist of building types which existed in antiquity. It also incorporates a whole range of contemporary building types which concertedly partake of physical enjoyment or intellectual inquiry.

By contrast, a parting of the ways with worldly expression forms the cornerstone of the Christian mind. This is why the heavenly character of the church must take into account a whole range of factors foreign to the Greek mind and classical temple. Palm found the requisite built form for the spiritual contents of the religion in the Gothic *Kirchenbauweise*. His belief that architecture should arouse pious contemplation is perfectly expressed in the Medieval cathedral's apparent intoxication with de-materializing a sense of enclosure; the stream of light from huge nave and choir windows, the appearance of walls without solidity, the towering pointed arches reaching upward: *"die äußere kirche selbst muß ein Bild geben von Licht, Leben und Liebe, wie diese der christlichen Gemeinde wesentlich eigen sind."*⁶⁹

Responding to the material motivations behind Hübsch's recommendation of the Romanesque, Palm transformed the latter's terms of debate from climate (i.e., the necessity for large windows) to the dominion of the spirit. Hence the round arches, seen by Hübsch as preferable for their large width, are judged unfitting for the intense Christian sense of spirit by Palm in consequence of their serene form:

Der Rundbogenstyl entspricht der frühen Zeit der Tugend, da diese durch ein Gesetz im Gehorsam erhalten wird, dem sie nur mehr als einem äußerlichem sich fügt, bis die Zeit da ist, wie dies der gothische Styl darstellt, daß jene dasselbe Gesetz der höheren Ordnung in Selbstthatigen Freiheit mit jugendlichem Feuer ergreift, und in ihrem idealen Streben zur inneren Richtschnur ihrer begeisterten Thätigkeit erhebt. So schwingt sich der gothische Spitzbogen in den himmel hinein, während jener Rundbogen

die Rundung des himmels äußerlich nachahmen, hoch oben über sich die
himmelswölbung trägt.⁶⁰

Because of its strong dependence upon a character-analysis of a building, Palm's system is most cogent when applied to pre-industrial building types. For more recent building types, those for which the analogy of character cannot be made convincingly, the system runs into difficulties. It is altogether unclear how the vocabularies and grammars of existing styles will be applied to new building tasks. For one thing, the potential aggregation of different stylistic features to express a brand new building type would undermine the character-oriented propriety accorded to older types in Palm's system.

The growing nationalist strain in German architectural theory culminated in the influential texts of August Reichensperger. Reichensperger, who studied in Bonn, Heidelberg and Berlin, lived most of his life in Cologne. Equipped with a deep knowledge of Catholic theology, he was a conservative propagandist for Gothic culture and Christian art in the Rhine valley. In his version of the essay, "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?" (1852), he asked the barbed question: why do contemporary Germans decorate their buildings with the statues of half-naked Gods, the images of heathens? Lamenting that we seem to prefer the 2,000 year old Greeks to our own (Germanic) cathedral buildings, Reichensperger despaired in understanding what the ancient Greeks have to offer to the life, beliefs and history of a contemporary German city like Berlin.⁶¹

Like Palm, Reichensperger was deeply troubled by the ongoing blending of different period styles, the confusion of materials and decorative schemes. In his larger study, Die Christlich-germanischen Baukunst und ihr Verhältnis zur Gegenwart (1852), he broadly complained of ostentatiousness, anarchy and a level of confusion worthy of Babylon.⁶² If we take Reichensperger at his word, the degeneration of art is a product of an overall degeneration of culture. In specifics, a unified, principled and creative culture has been replaced by stylistic disarray: "*Frivolität neben Geistesarmuth, unerquickliche Schaugerichte statt stärkender Seelennahrung...überall viel Geschrei und wenig Wolle!*"⁶³

In contrast to Palm, who found attributes in a number of historical styles which correspond to his notion of the heterogeneous nature of contemporary society, Reichensperger inveighed squarely against a theory of architectural eclecticism. To his mind, stylistic diversity is itself a symptom of cultural crisis. Democracy, he held, by encouraging everyone to want to be everything, makes impossible a general set of societal values. Art, furthermore, cannot be the dispersed products of individuals, but must stir from a communal societal soul.⁶⁴

This communal soul is Christianity. From the outset, then, the invigoration of art is dependent upon a rejuvenation of the spiritual values of the Christian religion at its peak of influence, the Middle Ages. Like the English theorist A.W. Pugin, who believed that the Reformation was the beginning of the decline in architecture, Reichensperger linked the weakening of religion to the fall of architecture.⁶⁵ Although Reichensperger recognized that Christian values no longer dictate the sweeping loyalty they once did, Christianity remained for him the single potentially unifying force for contemporary culture. As he interpreted culture, all traditions, needs, and building methods correspond to Christianity. Thus, if the ideas of the religion were still valid and capable of renewal, a return to the building style of the Middle Ages was also perfectly reasonable.

Given this unitary belief in cultural expression, Reichensperger understood the Christian architecture of the Middle Ages not so much as the opposite of Greek design, but rather as a higher evolutionary development of various strands of pagan antiquity: the fusion of the gigantic and imaginative ideals of Mesopotamia and Egypt with the clarity, harmony, and lawfulness of Greece. Though, for want of Christianity, antiquity featured many architectural styles, in the age of the true religion only a single style can bloom. As Reichensperger put it, Gothic design represented for the Middle Ages both the Christian spirit of ascension and the purposive response to the northern European climate.⁶⁶ It responded, in other words, to the complete spiritual and material needs of the people. As a

move toward the Middle Ages represents an awakening of *den alten Corporationsgeist*, it is not so much a move backwards, but a forward step:

Wir schreiten vorwärts vom Heidenthume zum Christenthume, von der alsten Welt zur neuen, von Griechen- und Römerthume zum Deutschthume, vorwärts von der anarchisten Verwirrung zur höchsten Einheit und Gesetzmäßigkeit, vorwärts von blinder Nachahmung zu bewußter Selbstständigkeit - wir machen einen Riesenfortschritt von mindestens anderthalb Jahrtausenden!⁶⁷

Like the English medievalists, Reichensperger intended that the reform of architecture must begin with immersion in both the spiritual and practical activity characteristic of the Middle Ages. His plans for this included locating, inventorying and preserving old monuments; developing organizations for artistic activity patterned on the old artistic guilds; and contributing to the public's knowledge and taste for medieval design.⁶⁸

Although the association of style with the higher life of a people would not always be as strongly determined by a medieval conception of Christianity as it was in the 1840s and 1850s, this relationship would run deep in German and Austrian architectural theory of the second half of the century. Moreover, as we have seen, the pertinence of an architectural style became increasingly dependent upon related material factors; whether the stylistic model manifests deep similarities in climate, customs, construction methods and most importantly, *Lebensanschauung*. Largely for these reasons, Greek design was gradually forsaken by architectural theorists. After Bötticher, the buildings of Greek (and Roman, for that matter) antiquity were given marginal theoretical attention. Both the religious beliefs and climactic conditions of Greece were too different from those of Northern Europe to allow for a strong case to be made for either their spiritual or practical relevancy. For the moment, the apparent correspondence of material and spiritual values of the Middle Ages with those of the nineteenth century led to continued proposals for a renewal of medieval *Bauweise*.⁶⁹

Interest in the concept *Lebensanschauung* resulted from the widening range of factors given consideration in determining stylistic relevancy. As this concept contains in

microcosm a grossly generalizable set of traits, it became a useful notation for textually mastering the macrocosm of architectural reality. In the manner of other proponents of Gothic *Bauweise*, Oscar Mothes in "Aphorisms über die Stilfrage," 1874 interpreted style as the product of the common *Züge und Anschauungen* of a people. Mothes, who had worked in Gottfried Semper's atelier, also studied architecture in Dresden. Despite his employment by Semper, Mothes' design career in Saxony encompassed new buildings and restorations in the Gothic style. Mothes' conviction in the Gothic stemmed from his belief that the whole of an architectural style must be flexible enough to adapt to the habits, customs, and needs of a people. Style must approximate national character, and must:

liegt bei der allgemeinen Biagsamkeit menschlichen Phantasie außer allen Bereich der Möglichkeit, die Prinzipien desselben aber werden, das ist bei dem Gleichbleiben des Klimas, bei der Stetigkeit des deutschen Charakters und der Lebensanschauung des Deutschen, bei dem starken Vorherrschen des Verstandes in Allem, was der Deutsche denkt und thut, unzweifelhaft, die Prinzipien des deutschen Baustyls der Zukunft werden und können nicht die nur am Äußern haftenden Prinzipien der Renaissance, sondern dieselben in innersten wesen bauliches Wirkenss und Schaffens beruhenden Prinzipien sein, aus denen vor Jahrhunderten der gotische Stil sich entwickelte.⁷⁰

To be valid for the present age, therefore, a style must both: demonstrate that its forms correspond perfectly to a culture's spiritual values and material needs, its *Lebensanschauungen*; and, more importantly, prove that the marriage of form with these cultural ingredients still operates today. It is only in Gothic design, we are told, that both criteria are satisfied. First of all, Mothes went a long way to elaborate the spiritual enhancement brought about by the Gothic awakening of material power. Secondly, the cultural correspondence between the Christian mind-set, Northern European culture, and Gothic forms is remarkable: the consideration of climate in the layout of the roof, window ledges and walls; the avoidance of all surface details which do not relate to the logical necessity of the building.⁷¹ Lastly, and most significantly, for Mothes Gothic design has not outlived its previous usefulness. It still meets the cultural needs of Northern European people.

By contrast, Greek architecture, admirably suited to its culture, meets the first criterion, but does not meet the second. Since Greek forms do not correspond to the *Lebensanschauungen* of contemporary Europeans, Mothes judged Greek architecture as valid only for the lessons it teaches us in arranging building parts, but not for overall formal motivation. Mothes also found fatal flaws in Renaissance design, writing that "*Die baulichen Formensysteme hatten seit dem Auftauschen der Renaissance den Charakter der Stile eingeübt und der Mode angenommen.*"⁷²

The Renaissance style copied and created Roman forms without adequately regarding their relevance to material and spiritual concerns. It has deceived us since it was constructed in northern Europe for similar building uses as those of the Gothic. Hence, its forms are deemed invalid. They fail to satisfy the mandated cultural correspondence, or the first criterion above. In the manner of the Renaissance, the Roman style chose decorative schemes without regard for disposition, classification, construction, purpose and climatic placement. Given this, Mothes tells us that "*Das römische Formsystem wurde an die Gebäude angeheftet, ohne daß deren innere Eintheilung irgend einen organischen Zusammenhänge mit diesem System hatte...nur die sichtbaren Formen dieses Stils.*"⁷³

Rebirth of the Renaissance

Such medievalist arguments against the classical vocabulary embodied in European Renaissance and Baroque architecture were heard well into the twentieth century. Nevertheless, in the second half of the nineteenth century testimony was also given for a case which championed Renaissance forms on the basis of cultural continuity.⁷⁴ The development of the field of art history during the century was also a great impetus to historical studies of early modern Italy. Carl Friedrich Rumohr's Italienischen Forschungen (1827) created a new relationship to Italian art which may have influenced

architects taking renewed interest in Renaissance design. Earlier, medievalists had attempted to reveal the pertinence of the Middle Ages through association with contemporary beliefs, climate, materials, and other conditions. Now, proponents of the Renaissance (and as we will see, later the Baroque) established a relationship between the meaningful content of the nineteenth century and the cultural values and institutions present during those centuries which had immediately preceded it.

Perhaps the most influential argument of this sort was that of Gottfried Semper, one of the most important architects and architectural writers of nineteenth century Europe. Semper regarded the Renaissance style, as did Wiegmann the Romanesque and Rosenthal the Gothic, as an uncompleted building style capable of further development.⁷⁵ Although he never developed a detailed theoretical position for the adoption of Renaissance forms by the nineteenth century, and professed no answer to the stylistic question, Semper also widely used Renaissance forms on his public buildings, which had a great impact on subsequent theories. It is likely that the enormous influence of Semper's monumental Der Stil (1860) lent his practical usage of the Renaissance/Baroque vocabulary greater currency than he may himself have intended.

Semper's turn to the Renaissance also makes sense in light of his philosophy of design. Semper's theory of architectural cladding, as we will discuss further in Chapter Five, maintained that most of the decorative symbols used in architecture have their origin and derivation in the textile arts.⁷⁶ It thus made sense for him that in clothing the building's naked structure, decorating a constructive frame, the formal vocabulary should be drawn from that set of forms which he saw as the culmination of a developmental sequence in the productive arts. The classical vocabulary, as used in Renaissance/Baroque architecture, extended in a more or less unbroken linear sequence from the primitive origins of the textile arts to contemporary times. Moreover, the cladding of a building in significant forms was correlated by Semper to be the style most suited to extending the

Bekleidungsprinzip into monumental form. The great variety of modern building types required a flexible set of forms which could easily be monumentalized, and here again, Semper found the source in classicism. As he wrote, the cosmopolitan culture of Rome contained within it the synthesis of two seemingly contradictory cultural forces: the striving toward individuality and the merging into the collective.⁷⁷

Thus, the stylistic successors to Rome, the Renaissance and Baroque ages, might be said to possess the robustness of ornamental form necessary for the complex, and monumental building tasks of the nineteenth century; the age of individualism in need of collective expression. Nor could any style be said to safeguard the traditions of Europe as could the Renaissance. The secure stream of Renaissance forms offered Germans and Austrians, as they did the French of the Beaux Arts tradition, a haven amidst stylistic chaos. While not as popular in Protestant Northern Germany as in Catholic Austria, the strength of the Renaissance/Baroque tradition of Italy seduced Central Europe in the decades between 1860 and 1900.

In his *Geschichte des modernen Geschmacks* (1866), the second director of the Vienna Museum of Art and Industry, Jacob von Falke, detailed the threat of stylistic chaos and the need for a secure tradition. He made explicit what had become obvious by his time; that is, the interminable vagaries of style led to the hollow speech of imitation. Writing about the arts in general, Falke bemoaned the grey mixture of styles from every historical period ever known, the preponderance of impulses for eclectic novelty. Describing artistic conditions before the 1860s as almost bleak, Falke characterized the period as one of *Stillosigkeit* and *Unbestimmtheit*. Especially before 1848, he summarized that architects had worked best in a resurrected Rococo or in a mixture of French artistic styles of the eighteenth century.⁷⁸

As far as Falke saw it, nineteenth century artists - called moderns - will always remain imitators so long as they not only study the past, but also borrow objects of

representation and forms of expression from it. Their resulting modernity is incomplete because it harbors the promise of complete recovery of ancient styles. Yet, ironically, Falke reasoned that the resumption of an historic style was needed, especially in light of these bankrupt methods. Falke, like the Medieval reformers before him, understood the need for a new style modelled from the coherent forms of tradition. They only differed in what they considered to be the appropriate tradition.

Falke found tradition in the Italian Renaissance and Baroque ages. In reconnecting with this cultural stream, he forecast a profound new order; and in the architectural projects of the Ringstraße, he saw neither eclecticism nor a re-make of the sober *Biedermeier Bureaustil*. What had changed was the use of the styles of the Italian Renaissance for all manner of buildings in Vienna. Arguing completely contrary to proponents of a revival of the Germanic Middle Ages, Falke saw the Italian architectural prototypes as closely related to modern needs in Austria.

Sie stehen am Beginne der gegenwärtige Culturepoche und sind die Schöpfungen einer eminenten Kunstperiode, welche gleich gross im Erfinden und Schmücken, wie in Vollkommenheit der Ausführung war. Die nachfolgenden, uns näher stehenden Epochen kamen ihr darin nicht gleich und verloren zudem an einfach klarem Formgefühl. Insofern deckten sich die Ideen des Museums vollkommen mit denen des Architekten, und der neue Baustil Wiens wurde auch der neue Wiener Kunstgewerbstil. Renaissance hiess es hier wie dort.⁷⁹

Renaissance architecture, in other words, was understood to be the cultural ancestor of the nineteenth century. Just as the Medievalists found cultural correspondence in the world of the Gothic, Falke reasoned that the more modern Renaissance age approximated the needs of the contemporary age more closely.

As with other stylistic revivals, understanding of the concept Renaissance was shaken by political events. The unification of Germany in 1871 had led to the creation of the greatest economic and military power in Europe. At the same time it undeniably made Germany susceptible to a long wave of sententious nationalistic fervor. One of the earliest such manifestations of German nationalism was a determination to rediscover the unique

architectural style of Germany. Austria was content with its identification with the legacy of the Italian Renaissance and Baroque. Most Austrian lands had, of course, been latinized. In Germany, lacking a Latin tradition, Mediterranean culture proved troublesome. For those writers uncomfortable with the pure application of medieval and classical traditions to Germany, a new alternative was sought. While nationalist fervor three decades earlier had pointed in the direction of the Middle Ages, a new phase of German cultural history now received attention; the period known as the German Renaissance.

The ambition to end stylistic debate by uncovering a true German Renaissance design approach is represented by the writing of H. Stier. As he observed in his 1884 article encouraging a revival of the *deutsche Renaissance*, the foremost reason for the persistence of the debate on styles can only be that the most suitable style for our time has not yet been investigated. In the wake of Germany's unification and successful war against France, that historical *Bildungszustand* was seen by Stier to have been the last era of German cultural autonomy, the 16th century. In those times, cut off abruptly by the Thirty Years Wars, Stier located a glorious age of native creativity.

Consequently, it is to the supposed youngest of all historical styles - that of the German Renaissance - to which Stier wanted to turn our attention. Characterized by a use of color and asymmetrical arrangement, the German Renaissance style was in no way related to contemporary academicism.⁸⁰ Stier's intention to use the German Renaissance as foundation for future architecture was based on his judgment that all aspects of middle class life today have their models in the sixteenth century. Above all, the German Renaissance was an art form not for the noble classes, but securely in the general possession of the common people. Interested not only in architecture, but also in *Kunstgewerbe*, he remarked that the height of the German Renaissance coincided with the enhanced production of articles for daily life.⁸¹ Hence the characteristic stamp of the style

was the house, whence "entwickelt sie ihr Formensprache und der mittlere Maaßstab, die kleineren und engen Verhältnisse, wie sie dieser Baugattung nach den Lebensgewohnheiten jener Zeit..."⁶² An awareness of the significance of the German Renaissance for future development of the German home made clear for Stier the great national advance which this style represented.

The German Renaissance, on a deeper ideological level, lies in a special relationship to our contemporary mentality as the first expression of humanism in the sciences:

im Lösung der Persönlichkeit von den Schranken der mittelalterlichen Genossenschaften, im Aufblühen der Fürstenmacht und vor allem des bürgerlichen Standes gegenüber der Herrschaft der Kirches erhalten haben, und ferner in stofflicher Beziehung durch Verwandtschaft in Sitten, Lebensgewohnheiten und Rücksichten auf besondere volksthümliche Eigenschaften und auf die Witterwegs-Verhältnisse des Landes."⁶³

Convinced of the logic of the style for today's needs, Stier went on to claim that the German Renaissance is the synthesis of the languages of antiquity and the Middle Ages, the essential admixture that has created German culture.⁶⁴ Thus, the correlation to earlier styles proves the influence of historical development on the German Renaissance, vitally enriching it with the legitimacy of the historical spirit.

The great period of stylistic inquiry, which had commenced with the archaeological discovery of Greece, had, as we have seen, enumerated an entire chronology of the architectural past.⁶⁵ And, it is of no small matter that the enduring quest to discover a historical style was more and more motivated by the growth of national awareness. As mentioned above, the Austrian situation became increasingly different from that of the Germans after 1871. In Austria, the monarchy's official style was Neo-Baroque, exemplified by the architectural office of Ferdinand Fellner und Hermann G. Helman.⁶⁶ The popularity and nationalist identification of this style with the Hapsburg monarchy was further brought out by Albert Ilg's numerous writings. A Viennese native, Ilg studied art history in that city, and early on became a docent at the *Fachschule für Kunststickerei*. He

eventually was named Director of the art historical collections of the Imperial Hapsburg family.

In his influential book, Die Zukunft des Barockstils (1888), Ilg confronted the question regarding the viability of the Baroque style. He observed that the stylistic revival of the nineteenth century had been much about finding a better style than the Baroque. But, as a response to what he saw as wholly arbitrary historical abstractions and damaging cleavages with tradition, Ilg's answer lay precisely in the resumption of Baroque design. To supplant what he sees as the organic Baroque tradition, an entire range of arbitrary, theoretically supported styles were tried. These even included what Ilg saw as dangerous influences from Japan and China. Yet, no matter how good or beautiful any one of these 'imported styles' were, none fulfilled what Ilg reasoned to be Austria's *Kunstindustrieleben*.

Given these circumstances, Ilg was determined that theoretical animation of old styles must cease. By recognizing the *Begriffsverwirrung* of the stylistic debate, he hoped to cut through the illusion that the Baroque style is a deformed image of earlier robust international styles such as the Gothic or Renaissance. Until now, as Ilg saw it, everything that was not pleasing, and appeared bombastic was termed Baroque.⁸⁷ In reference to the negative conceptualization of the Baroque, Ilg dealt with its problems of association. His handling of the opposition of concepts of *Naturalismus* and *Stil* aimed toward reconciliation of Baroque characteristics. Consequently, he detailed that the Baroque (and *Zopfstil*) combine both style and naturalism in the most graceful creations. "*Durch ihre stilisirten Formen geht bewegte Lebendigkeit, ihre naturalistischen Details fügen sich in Arrangement, Vertheilung und Colorit dem Sinne des Ganzen...*"⁸⁸

In contrast to the barrenness of theory, Ilg counterpoised what he saw as the creative power of tradition. Citing the creative stimulation lent by the healthy French artistic tradition, he wrote:

Sie gaben nie einem besonderen Stil den Vorzug, ohne freilich auch mit der Cultivirung von solchen, welche für das moderne Leben unfruchtbar sind,

Zeit und Mühe zu verlieren. Sie lernten immer Alles, was Nutzen bot, und zwar nicht nur fachlichen, sondern auch materiellen...Allerdings begingen sie dabei viele Mißgriffe, schufen viel mehr Modefaftes und Stilwidriges als wir, aber sie blieben durch diese Concessionen in stetem Contact mit der Menge und wurden trotzdem immer besser dabei.¹⁸⁹

It was clear to him that the difficulties and dissonances caused by the continuation of tradition in France are worth the effort. No people can renew themselves outside tradition. Thus it was essential for Austrian artists to re-establish a sense of unity with their own traditions, which in all cases led back to the Baroque.

As Ilg saw it, the artistic absorption of ideas by Austria from France towards the end of the seventeenth century constitutes the basis of a truly Austrian art form. Historically, he tells us, the Austrian Baroque derived its initial inspiration from France, received additional nourishment from Italy, and later through independent digestion of local conditions achieved the position of a particularly Austrian art form. Hence, Baroque art was the first and only style of Austria. Formed in the complete spirit of its time, the Baroque style was the creation of different Austrian art industries, including silk, wallpaper, coachwork, glass, and porcelain.

A principal trait of the Austrian Baroque is its cultural comprehensiveness: *"Kein anderer Stil umfaßt in gleicher Universalität alle Künste, Techniken und Handwerke."*¹⁹⁰ Furthermore, the models of Austrian Baroque architecture lie throughout the inner city of Vienna. They are particularly suited to local needs and habits:

Für unsere Behausung taugt uns weder des pompejanische Atrium noch die gothische Ritterburg, noch die deutsche Renaissance-Wohnung mit ihren tiefen Sälen und hohen Treppengiebeln, vollständig aber das Modell aus jener Zeit, ob wir nun wie Prinz Eugen in Palästen Fischers von Erlach wohnen wollen oder in jenen närrischen, behaglichen Bürgerhäuschen, wie sie auf den Märkten alter Städte noch zu finden sind.¹⁹¹

As such, Ilg sermonized that the Baroque, as it developed in the Donaumonarchie, mirrored the qualities of the Austrian people: *"Das Österreichische Wesen ist die Leibhaftige Barockfacade: lustig und frisch und immer lächelnd, nirgends langweilig, voller Capricen und guter Dinge, ein ganzes Nest von Ueberraschungen."*¹⁹² Given this history, Ilg

sarcastically posed the inevitable question: would it be a misfortune if the artistic blossoms from the days of Leopold, Karl VI and Maria Theresa were renewed? If answered in the affirmative, he recommended that the Austrians do what the French had been doing: re-establish the connections to native tradition:

Ihr beredtes Zeugniß (of France) erweist abermals klar, daß nur derjenige Kunststil eines Volkes sein angemessenster, sein allein entsprechender und charakteristischer sein kann, dessen Blüthe mit der Blüthe der übrigen Factoren des Gedeihens zusammenfällt. Das war in Österreich erst mit der Barocke der Fall."⁹³

Clearly, both the Renaissance and Baroque styles were powerfully resonant to the recent memories of Austrians and Germans, especially after the confusing succession of more temporally distant styles in the first two-thirds of the century. By the 1880s, they were victorious in most building activity outside of churches. In "moderne Stylfragen" (1885), the Swiss-born Hans Auer maintained the importance of the stylistic vocabulary of Renaissance-Baroque architecture through an evolutionary approach, stressing that the complete span of historical building activity is the groundwork for a conception of a modern style. Auer had studied with the Danish classicist Theophil Hansen at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, and after 1890 became Professor of the History of Architecture in Bern. History for Auer, however, yielded but two ideas of spatial arrangement (the trabeated style of Egypt and Greece, and the vaulted style of Rome and the Middle Ages), out of which a great variety resulted. Auer showed his debt to Semper, stressing that the same types repeat themselves throughout history with minor variations. The great question here is which style of the past is most appropriate to the present. In other words, it is of utmost importance that the moderns choose the most appropriate ancient model, or those typological elements which correspond most to our needs and capabilities, and not least, artistic desires. *"Die modernen Stylfragen drehen sich immer nur darum, welcher dieser verflossenen Style die nachahmungswürdigsten und entsprechendsten Motive für die*

*künstlerische Darstellung unserer modernen Aufgaben aufzuweisen hat und wie diese Motive verwerthet werden sollen?*⁹⁴

It was perfectly natural to Auer that modern architecture explore the traditions of the Renaissance and Baroque. These periods are of great importance since, first of all, they once bloomed on native soil and were created in response to similar material needs.

*"Gewiss ist es richtig, dass derjenige Styl besondere Berücksichtigung und Beachtung durch alle Zeiten verdient, der einmal schon im Lande heimisch geworden ist und hier einen fruchtbaren Boden gefunden hat."*⁹⁵ Secondly, the 400 year Renaissance tradition is also the direct predecessor of the modern age. Alert to evolutionary theory, Auer was quick to point out that the general laws of nature tell us that in human culture each style is based on a preceding style.⁹⁶ Thirdly, as Auer saw it, all past stylistic forms - the antique as well as the Medieval - are embodied in the essence of our modern Renaissance. Auer found aspects of architecture - spatial disposition, organization of masses, constructive experience - which accord with what he sees as the modern development of the human spirit. This style is, in other words, based upon the simplest artistic principles, satisfies the spatial needs of the day, is easily adapted to each method of construction, and permits unlimited application of each material.⁹⁷

In another edition of the popular theme "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen" (1890), Albert Hofmann, a co-editor of the Deutsche Bauzeitung in Berlin, was also quite explicit in identifying the Italian Renaissance style as that most appropriate for modern Germany. *"Dieser grossen Volksidee muss die deutsche Kunst, muss die deutsche Architektur in einem dieser grossen Idee würdigen Ausdrucke, Style, folgen. Dieser Ausdruck liegt in der italienischen Renaissance..."*⁹⁸ The appeal of the Italian Renaissance over the more overtly national styles owes precisely to its adaptability to international conditions throughout Europe, and in particular, Germany. As it has been in so many texts, for Hofmann the question of choosing an appropriate style hinged on whether that style could

be expressive of the internal ideas of a people. Like Ilg and other theorists favoring the Renaissance/Baroque, Hofmann felt that the depth of interaction of this style is made apparent in French design. Here the constructively-daring buildings clothed in the Renaissance vocabulary of forms are evidence of the style's adaptability. Today, Hofmann wrote, the question of style is international, and utterly dependent upon our modern cultural relations, as the peculiarities of a land and its people are more and more submerged by uniformity.⁹⁹

Hofmann visualized an update of Semper's earlier argument, that a style only has value in our rapidly advancing age if it can correspond to the material and spiritual needs of our age. In writing that a style must possess a flexible vocabulary of forms, the protean means which favor artistic individuality, he was quick to point out the individuality and self-consciousness of the Italian Renaissance style.

Die italienische Renaissance entspricht nach Material, Technik und Formenbildung durchaus unseren modernen klimatischen und kulturellen Verhältnissen. Sie ist der Styl einer freien, weitblickenden Kultur, nicht eingeengt durch religiöse Vorurtheile, aber auch nicht irreligiös.¹⁰⁰

Hofmann disapproved of the Gothic for the narrow nationalistic and typological qualities which the Renaissance overcame. In a typological sense, Gothic architecture would be confined to church buildings. Secondly, its national means of expression is foremost associated with France and not Germany. Likewise, the other major pretender to the stylistic throne in the 1880s, the *deutsche Renaissance*, was criticized by Hofmann as offering too narrow a range of expressive potentialities. Given that it lacks forms capable of expressing monumentality, its use could only extend to simple houses.

Dissuasion from Stylistic Rhetoric

By 1890, a changing chorus of styles had played for over eight decades, and its phenomenalization had enveloped building production to an astonishing degree. Architectural writing on style had rediscovered, through its messengers into the past, what

seemed to theorists as almost the entirety of history. Yet, discovery of new styles occurred each decade, and as the century neared a close, the search for a unified style emerging from clear principles was no closer its goal than it had been in Hirt's time. In its most general terms, the search for a style had been based on extending the personality and formal attributes of a historical age to contemporary life. Nevertheless, this attempt to achieve a parallelism of architectural form with cultural signification was doomed by both the comprehensiveness of the theoretical equation and the complexity of building in the early modern age.

The century brought forth an uneasy co-existence of dissimilar historic styles in building. As far as the formal drama was concerned, Herrmann Muthesius offered a despondent assessment: *"Ein unwürdiges Stilreiben begann, in welchem Spätrenaissance, Barock, Rococo, Zopf und Empire gleichmässig abgeschlachtet und nach kurzer Zeit des Blutsaugens in die Ecke geworfen wurden."*¹⁰¹ For churches, architects worked mostly from Gothic models, while for secular buildings Renaissance/Baroque forms dominated design. But, as a description of individual buildings shows, even these categories were frequently undermined. What Muthesius described as a state of architectural formalism extended to all designs, irregardless of historical orientation. Differences were grounded in details. A look to the Gothic, Renaissance, and classical buildings of the Viennese Ring, for example, confirms the ineluctable fact that the practitioners of different styles could easily work in the same compositional manner.

Compositional rigidity and ornamental eclecticism grew side by side towards the century's end. But, Palm's acceptance of stylistic eclecticism found few theoretical supporters, even if its spirit dominated architectural production in the second half of the century. A considerable chasm grew between building production and theoretical explication. Writing followed a more idealistic track than building, which responded more to the marketplace. For the most part, to architectural writers, building seemed debased

and dishonest. Texts on architectural style followed notions of purity, and advocated the exclusive use of a single style for an age. Within the theoretical discourse, however, there can be no doubt that the stylistic arguments of historical synthesis and cultural correlation had become repetitive and mutually self-exclusive. For some, such as Ilg, the excessively theoretical attitude of his age led to sterility, where artists looked exclusively to antique models and not to the inner voice of their *Schönheitsgeföhles*; and by consulting the paragraphs of theoretical text they end up as abstract imitators.¹⁰² It is no wonder that in the 1880s and 1890s architects often write as if desperate to overcome confusion. The sense that the century lacked a sense of character seemed to animate their despair.

Undoubtedly, theoretical proclamations of architectural style emerged from widely divergent positions, and all too often poorly explicated philosophical frameworks. On the textual plane, we may observe that the different styles (be they Greek, Romanesque, Gothic or Renaissance) were defined by metaphysical violence and suppression of difference. As would be the case in other discourses on architecture and the practical arts during the century, the negative attributes of one concept were used as part of the argument to justify another concept.

In his "Stil-betrachtungen" (1890), K.E.O. Fritsch, founding editor of the Deutsche Bauzeitung, was aware of such epistemological maneuvers. He observed how styles were advocated through two kinds of negation: philosophical and architectural. In the first case, the dominant oppositional philosophical categories are: idealism-realism, freedom-lawfulness, subjective-objective. In the second instance, architectural oppositions feature: masonry wall-frame system, and arcuation-trabeation. Indeed, appraising the conceptual scheme of a style is accomplished by these and other bi-polar oppositions, such as: spiritual-practical, Christian-secular, Catholic-Protestant, Germanic-non-Germanic, Mediterranean-transalpine. What linked all these methods was a reliance upon the

exclusionary methodologies of the natural sciences. Describing the art historical method underlying the stylistic revival, Fritsch wrote:

Es (building) wurde studirt, gemessen, gezeichnet, photographirt, und veröffentlicht, wie seit lange nicht, und zwar nicht mehr in der früher so häufig betriebenen, halb dilettantistischen Art, sondern im Sinne und mit der Gründlichkeit der durch die Naturwissenschaften entwickelten Untersuchungs-Methode.¹⁰³

In effect, architectural styles, despite their deep ethical, historical and political roots, were abstracted and simplified for discursive purposes. As part of a textual strategy, the historical styles were narrated and transformed into an intended architectural enforcement of diverse epistemological and moral codes.

From a rhetorical point of view, the framing of theory around historical styles was vibrant so long as each new chapter of explication brought forth a rich enough store of revelations. In other words, as long as the advocates for a new style uncovered convincing interpretations of contemporary architecture and culture, they were taken seriously. Given the enduring fascination with history, it is no wonder that the public had great capacity for historical narratives of architecture. The a-historicism which emerged in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, however, signalled the demise of narratives on style. Especially by the 1890s, the saturation with history produced a reaction to ruminations on the past. In addition, latter arguments for historical styles were numbed by the lengthy trajectory of the discourse, and the inability of its framework to give due attention to new architectural questions. Clearly, this format of textual architecture had lost its creative power through repetition. It should come as no surprise that inquiry into the robustness of the debate on the styles with which to build uncovers epistemological lethargy by Loos's time.

It must have been clear to Loos that deliberation on the styles was overtly propagandistic, yet increasingly unconvincing. His rejection of the debate on styles itself, like that of so many writers on architecture at the turn of the century, may be seen as the abandonment of a worn-out epistemological journey. Loos saw that the deadlock of the

debate on the styles, longing for unity, had been bypassed by practice, which was eclectic. In order to forsake this stalemate, Loos challenged the very concept of the styles. His reasons for condemning the styles, initially, was not as much philosophical as it was tactical (i.e., to get out of the debate altogether).

By his later writings, as our discussion in Chapters Seven and Eight will show, his denial of the styles had contributed to his overall philosophical position on the essential nature of a work of design. Writing "Architektur" (1910) long after the initial excitement at archaeological discoveries had faded, Loos stated that archaeological attempts to recreate historical states of mind in regard to design are false. It is impossible to recreate architecture in the style of the past: *"ein jedes kunstwerk hat so starke inner gesetze, dass es nur in einer einzigen form erscheinen kann."*¹⁰⁴

Notes

1. Paul Celan, Poems, trans. Michael Hamburger (New York: Persea, 1980), p. 187.
2. Georg Lukacs, "Longing and Form" in Soul and Form, trans. Anna Bostock (Cambridge, Ma.: MIT, 1974), p. 91.
3. Ferdinand von Feldegg, "Die moderne Architektur in Oesterreich" in Die Architektur des XX. Jahrhunderts: Zeitschrift für moderne Baukunst, ed. Peter Haiko (Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth, 1989), p. 18.
4. Hermann Muthesius, Stilarchitektur und Baukunst (Mülheim-Ruhr: K. Schimmelpfend, 1902), p. 24.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
6. Adolf Loos, Ins Leere Gesprochen (Wien: Georg Prachner, 1981), p. 52.
7. Adolf Loos, Die Potemkinische Stadt (Wien: Georg Prachner, 1983), p. 56.
8. Adolf Loos, PS, p. 57.
9. According to Erwin Panofsky, the concept of style made its entrance in Western dialogue as: "early Italian writers about the history of art, such as Lorenzo Ghiberti, Leone Battista Alberti, and especially Giorgio Vasari, thought that classical art was overthrown at the beginning of the Christian era, and that it did not revive until it served as the foundation of the Renaissance style." Meaning in the Visual Arts (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1955), p. 40.
10. This is most true of the Italian treatise tradition after Alberti. As Françoise Choay has pointed out, the dynamic progression of Alberti's De re Aedificatoria according to generative principles was greatly different from Vitruvius' static text. Whereas Vitruvius had been content to borrow and assemble knowledge on traditional building methods, Alberti imposed his own order of reason. "Alberti and Vitruvius" in Architectural Design 19.1979, pp. 26-33.
11. Still, while the explanatory grounds for the universal classical style were made more complex, the desire for its justification remained unchanged.
12. See especially Claude Perrault, Ordonnance des cinq espèces des colonnes (Paris, 1683).
13. See the discussion of the century-long discovery of unknown parts of the Classical world (especially those of Greece and Ionia) in J. Mordaunt Crook, The Greek Revival, Neo-Classical Attitudes in British Architecture 1760-1870 (London: Murray, 1972).
14. Architects such as David Gilly (1748-1808) Friedrich Gilly (1772-1800), and Friedrich Weinbrenner (1766-1826) advocated a highly inventive form of Classicism, mixing period forms, and striving for an architecture which roused the emotions of the viewer. See Friedrich Weinbrenner, Architect of Karlsruhe, ed. David B. Brownlee (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania, 1986).
15. As Renate Wagner-Rieger writes, architectural design in the nineteenth century can be characterized as follows: "In selbstständiger Auseinandersetzung mit den historischen Vorbildern suchte man in schöpferischen Subjektivität originelle Lösungen zu schaffen." p. 98.

16. Hans Schmidkunz, "Das Kunstgewerbe als Ausdruck," Dekorative Kunst 15.1907, pp. 247 & 276. See Karl Schnaase, Geschichte der bildenden Künste, Eight Volumes (Düsseldorf, Stuttgart, 1869-79; A. Springer, Die Hegel'sche Geschichtsanschauung (Tübingen, 1848).
17. On the gothic revival see James McCauley, The Gothic Revival, 1745-1845 (London: Blackie, 1975); and Michael McCarthy, The Origins of the Gothic Revival (New Haven: Yale, 1987).
18. Alois Hirt, Die Baukunst nach den Grundsätzen der Alten (Berlin: Realschulbuchhandlung, 1809), p. iii.
19. As David Watkin and Tilman Mellinghoff write, Alois Hirt developed the notion of the characteristic: "That certain individuality by which forms, rhythms, thought and expression are distinguished, and specifically in the way demanded by the given object." German Architecture and the Classical Ideal (Cambridge, Ma.: MIT, 1987), p. 60.
20. Hirt, p. vii.
21. Ibid., p. 27.
22. Ibid., p. iv.
23. See Marc-Antoine Laugier, An Essay on Architecture, trans. Wolfgang and Anni Herrmann (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1977), p. 12. It is true that Laugier's Essai sur L'Architecture called for a strict structural honesty and classical simplicity which Goethe would have approved of. Yet, in attributing artistic perfection to the Greeks, Laugier also undertook to discover the original elements of architectural form in primitive circumstances, where he deduced that "in an architectural Order only the column, the entablature and the pediment may form an essential part of its composition."
24. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "On German Architecture" in German Essays on Art History, ed. Gert Schiff (N.Y.: Continuum, 1988), p. 35.
25. Goethe, p. 37
26. Jean Louis de Cordemoy, Nouveau Traité de toute l'Architecture (Paris: J.B. Coignard, 1706). In appealing for a colonnade church, Cordemoy was also recognizing the appeal of elements of the Gothic style for monumental architecture. See Robin Middleton, "The Abbé de Cordemoy & the Graeco-Gothic Ideal: A Prelude to Romantic Classicism" in Journal of the Warburg & Courtauld Institutes 25.1962.
27. J.H. Wolff, Beiträge zur Aesthetik der Baukunst, oder die Grundgesetze der plastischen Form, nachgewiesen zu den Haupttheilen der Griechischen Architektur (Leipzig & Darmstadt: Carl Wilhelm Leske, 1834), p. 2.
28. As J.H. Wolff also writes: "Keine form darf daher in der Architektur als willkürlich zugesetzte Verzierung erscheinen, sondern eine jede muss auf einem hinlänglichen Motive beruhen, welches entweder aus den Forderungen der Zweckmässigkeit, der Mitteln der Construction, der Natur des Materials oder dem passenden Hinzutreten von Planzenformen, der Anwendung von Bändern zur Befestigung, der symbolischen Bedeutung des Baues and seiner Theile und ähnlichen Anlässen hervorgeht." p. 26.
29. Karl Bötticher, "Das Prinzip der hellenischen und germanischen Bauweise" in ABZ 11.1846, p. 115.
30. Karl Bötticher, Die Tektonik der Hellenen (Potsdam, 1844), p. 26.

31. See Robin Middleton, "Hittorff's polychrome campaign," in The Beaux-Arts and nineteenth-century French architecture, ed. Middleton (Cambridge, Ma.: MIT, 1982).
32. See also Friedrich Eisenlohr, Rede über den Baustyl der neueren Zeit und seine Stellung im Leben der gegenwärtigen Menschheit (1833).
33. Heinrich Hübsch, In welchem Style sollen wir bauen? (Karlsruhe: Chr. Fr. Müller'schen Hofbuchhandlung, 1828), p. 3.
34. Ibid., p. 13.
35. Ibid., p. 16.
36. Nikolaus Pevsner, Some Architectural Writers of the Nineteenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), p. 74.
37. As Hübsch also writes in his book In welchem Styl sollen wir bauen, "Die außerordentlich steilen Giebel und Dachungen des Spitzbogen-Styls, welche sogar oft mit Metall gedeckt sind, sind mehr eine Folge des sich über all Theile verbreitenden Emporstrebens, und gehen keineswegs aus dem nördlichen Klima hervor, wie die weniger steilen Dächer des Rundbogen-Styls, welche sich bei einem mitunter sehr hohen Alter recht gut erhalten haben, beweisen." p. 49.
38. Klaus Döhmer divides the period into three phases: 1) Exotic pluralism- placement of ornament from different styles in a single work; 2) Classical pluralism- varieties of the Classical system and grammar itself, influenced by Renaissance and Baroque syntax; 3) Gothic pluralism- subsumption of historical elements under a subsuming concept such as the Rundbogenstyl. pp. 15-17.
39. Hammerschmidt, p. 56.
40. See Georg Germann's chapter on the 'Kölner Domblatt' in his Gothic Revival in Europe and Britain: Sources, Influences and Ideas, trans. Gerald Onn (Cambridge, Ma.: MIT, 1972).
41. R. Wiegmann, "Gedanken über die Entwicklung eines zeitgemäßen nationalen Baustyls" ABZ 6.1841, p. 208.
42. Ibid., p. 209.
43. Wiegmann is explicit on this point: "In den Produktionen aller Künste tritt mit der Einführung des Christenthums auch unmittelbar jenes Vorwalten und Zum-Ausdruck-Streben des Innerlichen und Gemüthvollen hervor, welches der Grundcharakter der neuen Aera im Gegensatz zu dem der antiken ist. In diesem Neigen des Unausprechlichen nach einer verständlichen Form und Gestalt, in dieser Abspiegelung tief innerer Ahnungen und Empfindungen am Aeußerlichen, in diese Magie, welche das Geistige und Sinnliche auf eine so mysteriöse Weise verfindet, besteht aber das Malerische, welches eben dadurch den entschiedensten Gegensatz zu dem Vorwiegen des Plastischen der vor-christlichen Kunst bildet." p. 209.
44. Ibid., p. 211. Wiegmann also argues, like Hübsch, of the affinity of the Middle Ages to our own; "dieselben ökonomischen und räumlichen Erfordernisse, dasselbe Klima, dasselbe Baumaterial und dieselben statischen und physikalischen Gesetze, welche auf die Gestaltung des Bauwerks einen wesentlichen Einfluß ausüben." p. 212.
45. Ibid., p. 212.

46.Ibid., p. 213.

47.Rosenthal, "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?" ZPbK 4.1844.

48.Rosenthal elsewhere adds: "Die ferner die baulichen Bedürfnisse unmittelbar aus dem Klima, und den Sitten und Gebräuchen, dem ganzen Leben und Sein des Volkes hervorgehen, so folgt auch, daß die Baukunst den Charakter des Landes und seiner Bewohner aussprechen muß, und zwar deutlicher als irgend eine andere Kunst, wo häufig fremdartige, d.h., nicht nationale Gegenstände zur Darstellung gewählt werden." "Was will die Baukunst eigentlich," ABZ 9.1844, p. 268-269.

49.Rosenthal views this spiritual state as that of Protestant Germany. And, for him, the Reformation is no more finished than are the building ways of the German *Baustyl*: "Beide nach ihrer eigentlichen Bestimmung neu aufzufassen und ihrer Vollendung entgegen zu führen, scheint dem lebendigen Streben der jetzigen und der nächsten Folgezeit vorbehalten zu sein." "In welchem Style..." p. 27.

50.On this issue, Rosenthal shares affinity with Wilhelm Stier, whose arguments are contained in "Das Centralmoment bei der historischen Entwicklung des germanischen Baustyles," ABZ 9.1844.

51.Rosenthal, "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen," p. 23.

52.Rosenthal, "Was will die Baukunst eigentlich?" p. 268.

53.Ibid., p. 269.

54.Ibid., p. 273.

55.Rosenthal, "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen," p. 26.

56.G. Palm, Von welchen Principien soll die Wahl des Baustyls, insbesondere des Kirchenbaustyls geleitet werden? (Hamburg: Agentur des Rauhen haufes, 1845), p. 2.

57.Ibid., pp. 11-12.

58.Ibid., p. 20.

59.Ibid., p. 39.

60.Ibid., p. 77.

61.August Reichensperger, "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?" ZPbK 12.1852, p. 294.

62.August Reichensperger, Die Christlich-germanisch Baukunst und ihr Verhältnis zur Gegenwart (Trier: Fr. Lintz'schen, 1852), p. 43.

63.Ibid., p. 46.

64.On this note Reichensperger wrote: "Insbesondere aber hängt die Baukunst durch die stärksten Bande mit der Kultur und dem Streben einer Nation zusammen und hält der jedesmaligen Zeitrichtung den getreuesten Spiegel vor, sowohl weil alle Künste in ihr sich begegnen und ihre gemeinsame Grundlage in ihr finden, als auch weil sie ihre Natur nach das Erzeugniß allseitigerer, reiflicherer Erwägung ist, gleichsam wie ein zweites Kleid sich um den ganzen Menschen legt und allen einen Bedürfnissen und Wünschen sich anzupassen hat." Ibid., p 59.

65. See A.W. Pugin, Contrasts: Or a Parallel Between the Architecture of the 15 and 19th Centuries and Similar Building of the Present Day, Shewing the Present Decay of Taste (London, 1836), pp. 2-6.

66. Reichensperger is clear on this point: "Die steilen, spitzwinkligen Bedachungen erwecken durch ihre Form die Idee der Vergeisterung, des steten Aufschwungs nach Oben; sie entsprechen aber auch zugleich den climatischen Verhältnissen unseres Himmelstriches am meisten und bieten den Angriffen der Element am wirksamsten trotz." Die Christlich..., p. 17.

67. Ibid., p. 51.

68. Ibid., p. 68.

69. In referring to the affinity of Gothic design with the mind of Christian man, for instance, W. Lotz wrote much in the spirit of Rosenthal and Reichensperger: "Wir dürfen wohl sagen: keine Kunst hat diesen Zweck so vollständig erreicht, als die gothische. Durch jenes Streben nach oben, welches in allen ihren ächten Schöpfungen lebt, ist sie gleichsam eine Erscheinung des Strebens der Menschheit nach der verklärten Welt, welche die wahre Religion giebt, hat sie einen Zug ewigen Lebens an sich." "Über die Bedeutung der gothischen Baukunst für unsere Zeit," DBZ 2.1868, p. 208.

70. Oscar Mothes, "Aphorisms über die Stilfrage" ZPbK 34.1874, p. 324.

71. Ibid., p. 293.

72. Ibid., p. 322.

73. Ibid., p. 293.

74. See K. Milde, Neorenaissance in der deutschen Architektur des 19. Jahrhunderts (Dresden, 1981).

75. Gottfried Semper, Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten, oder praktische Aesthetik (München, 1879), p. 487.

76. Ibid., p. 217.

77. Gottfried Semper, "On Architectural Styles" [1869], in The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings, p. 281.

78. This is evidenced on the Palais Liechtenstein, so admired by Loos. Jacob von Falke, "Das Kunstgewerbe," in Wien 1848-1888, ed. Gemeinderathe der Stadt Wien (Wien: Commissions-Verlag von Carl Konigen, 1888), p. 245.

79. Jacob von Falke, "Das Kunstgewerbe," pp. 276-277.

80. Stephen Muthesius, Das Englische Vorbild: eine Studie zu den deutschen reformbewegungen in Architektur, Wohnbahn, & Kunstgeschichte im späten 19. Jahrhundert (München: Prestel, 1974), pp. 88-90.

81. From these largely forgotten technological modes of production, H. Stier reasoned, we can reinvigorate our contemporary artistic movement. "Die deutsche Renaissance als nationaler Stil und die Grenzen ihrer Anwendung," DBZ 18.1884, p. 427.

82. Stier, p. 435.

83.Ibid., p. 428.

84.H. Stier wrote that: Freilich sind die beiden Quellen, die hier zum ersten Male in ein Bett zusammen geleitet werden, weit genug von ihrem Ursprung entfernt und mannichfaltig getrübt." p. 428.

85.For Albert Ilg, these adherents ignored all previous rules, all schools and discipline - and see their original geniality only in "Dem geschmacklosesten Misch-Masch eines geradezu verrückten Stildurcheinanders..." "Die neueste Wiener Privat-Architektur" Der Architekt 1.1895, p. 17.

86.Akos Moravánsky, Die Architektur der Donaumonarchie (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1988), p. 38. Still, as Cornelius Gurlitt reminds us, Baroque tendencies were popular in Dresden during the 1870s. Die deutsche Kunst des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, ihre Ziele und Täten (Berlin: Georg Bondi, 1979), p. 431.

87.Albert Ilg also called for the historic preservation of old monumental architecture in Vienna's central district. Ibid., p. 18.

88.Albert Ilg (Bernini dem Jüngern), Die Zukunft des Barockstils (Wien: Mang'sche K.K. Hofverlags u. Universitäts Buchhandlung, 1880), p. 29.

89.Ibid., p. 32.

90.Ibid., p. 17.

91.Ibid., p. 22.

92.Ibid., p. 42.

93.Ibid., p. 40.

94.Hans Auer, "Moderne Stylfragen," ABZ 50.1885, p. 20.

95.Ibid., p. 26.

96.Ibid., p. 21.

97.Ibid., p. 19.

98.Albert Hofmann, "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen," ABZ 55.1890, p. 91.

99.Ibid., p. 81.

100.Ibid., p. 89.

101.Muthesius, Stilarchitektur und Baukunst, p. 36.

102.Ilg, Die Zukunft des Barockstils, p. 6.

103.K.E.O. Fritsch, "Stil-Betrachtungen," DBZ 24.1890, p. 424.

104. Adolf Loos, Trotzdem (Wien: Georg Prachner, 1982), p. 95.

CHAPTER 3
ACCOMMODATING THE PRACTICAL ARTS TO
INDUSTRIAL & DOMESTIC LIFE

The twentieth century specification of industrial production and domestic routine as factors of design represents a conceptual revolution. It not only signifies a widespread denial of the classical grammar of composition, but underscores the pervasive empirical attitude adopted during the nineteenth century. By 1900, empirical investigations had become a principal means for revealing knowledge of the practical arts. If the eighteenth century aristocratic mind had relied supremely on macrocosmic conceptions of human reason or nature, the nineteenth century bourgeois mentality came to understand itself more through the microcosm of detailed observation.

In general, architecture's embrace of empirical observation owed no small debt to its theoretical encounter with the other practical arts. With the founding of applied art museums, writings on *Kunstgewerbe* represented an integrated discourse on questions relevant to both architecture and crafts such as furniture making, ceramics, and glassware. Since these practical arts did not boast an academic tradition comparable to architecture, painting and sculpture, the immediate pragmatic horizon commanded greater attention.¹ Writing in 1896, Richard Streiter felt that functional demands could be realized much sooner in *Kleinkunst* than in slow-moving architecture.² It has always been so in history, wrote Streiter, and: "*So ist denn vielleicht die Hoffnung doch nicht ganz unbegründet, daß das, was sich hier im Kleinen vorbereitet, allmählig auch in der Architektur im großen sich vollzieht...*"³ Likewise, the architectural turn to empirical observation, materiality, and productive conditions, as described by Joseph August Lux, was credited to reflections on *Kunstgewerbe*.

Die Kunst ist vielleicht letztendes Sache des Taktgefühls, welches Übereinstimmung von Wesen und Form verlangt. Das leicht bewegliche Kunstgewerbe konnte natürlich rascher der neuen Anschauung folgen, als die Baukunst, die schwerfälligste aller Künste, die zugleich für Generationen schafft.⁴

The discourse on the practical arts was a visible language that mirrored the innumerable changes in urban society and exemplified the design potentials and contradictions of the modern age.

As much as any other discourse on the visual arts during the nineteenth century, the association of architecture with the other practical arts contributed to an awareness of the former as caught within the sharply contrasting values of industrial culture. To a greater degree than independent architectural polemics, this consolidated discourse on *Kunstgewerbe* paid close attention to the modern transformation of everyday life. Its writers recognized the importance of industry in the production of building materials and other objects. Likewise, in the case of domestic design, understanding of the home was more than ever deciphered from an evaluation of the new patterns and implements of urban bourgeois life.

These new theoretical orientations represent the institutionalization of middle class concerns in discourse. The identification of middle class values in practical art objects, however, was not a simple matter. The destabilizing aspects of cosmopolitan urban society meant that the *Kunstgewerbe* discourse exemplified the ideological fissures characteristic of bourgeois society. As this discourse will show, the disunity of middle class concerns prevents their articulation of a clear vision of their role in society. The middle class doctrines on the practical arts did not easily distinguish between a dependence on the values of aristocratic civility and an ability to create a new set of values from social and economic realities. Thus, the rise of empirical investigation in the practical arts and architecture was forceful, but divisive.

In the nineteenth century, empirical currents were not easily reconciled. Alongside attempts to secure an affiliation to historical tradition, as the debate on styles has already indicated, scientific observation and the immanent power of the machine presented a completely different set of possibilities. Traditionally driven to imitate and appropriate artistic symbols which were the monopoly of earlier authorities, nineteenth century bourgeoisie often sought to incorporate historical features into its evolving social order. In other cases, the desire to justify the practical arts by reference to industry and domesticity guaranteed a more utilitarian vantage point. What resulted was an imperfect resolution of this new empiricism in architecture into what we can call traditional and innovative stances. Polemics regarding the two positions were characteristic of the split in bourgeois mentality as it attempted to impose its own image on architectural culture. What separated these positions was the motivations of quite different temporal claims.

During the second- and third-quarters of the century, the initial reaction to machine production was one of widespread disapproval, resulting in calls for an intensification of traditional education. It led to art academy and museum-based historical investigations on those aspects of tradition relevant for contemporary design. Traditionalists argued the importance of established stylistic schema, and promised to reinvigorate those stable artistic codes of taste which ruled in the past. In opposing industrial society, they often preferred imitation, seeking a relation to the forms of a past age where values were clearly audible. Yet, the growth of materialist explanation of historical forces after the 1860s also meant that towards the end of the century the pursuit of tradition was increasingly understood dynamically, rather than statically, through theories of historical change and transformation.

Not surprisingly, the growing attempts to explain contemporary design through historical transfiguration contributed to a movement to de-historicize creative activity. By the 1880s and 1890s, many writers discarded overt imitation and historicism in an attempt

to re-orient design observation and investigation to the immediate perception of industry and urban life. Beginning in the 1880s, numerous German and Austrian theorists began to pay tribute to the virtues of machine production and product standardization. The urge to innovate merged with an acceptance of large-scale industrial activity. In a similar vein, awareness of the new domestic needs of the great cities turned attention to the functional layout of residential architecture. The overall increase in the estimation of utility engendered a rage for functional appropriateness in the discourse on domestic design after 1880.

If the state of affairs in the nineteenth century discourse on *Kunstgewerbe* revolved around claims for tradition and innovation, the two concepts were anything but mutually exclusive. Historicist imitation, or the search for ideas based on past precedents, was a process by which the middle classes imaginatively extended their image of enduring values to new products and building types. A bourgeois design order was created from representations of the old aristocracy. Yet since traditionalists came from the new productive classes, they were not nearly as dogmatically opposed to machine production as were their English counterparts. As we will see, many advocates of industrial innovation in the 1890s were originally proponents of historicist design. Likewise, the emergence of machine-based design culture was never innocent of the symbolic values associated with traditional culture. Scientific observation of contemporary needs and metaphors of the machine did not fully disengage concerns for the maintenance of traditional values. A wide consensus on utilitarian design was as rarely achieved here as in other textual discourse on design during the nineteenth century.

Dislocations of the Machine Age

Much of the disunity in the *Kunstgewerbe* discourse stemmed from crisis of identity crisis within the middle class. Although industrial production and urbanization had thrust

this social stratum to the forefront of society, their hierarchically-deferential relationship to the upper classes was not as easily shaken off. A crucial crossroads emerged during the second half of the nineteenth century. Should middle class design strike out in an independent, practical-minded direction, or should it attempt to adopt those values traditional to the upper classes? Adolf Loos's opinions on the *Kunstgewerbe* discourse, written half a century after its wellsprings, express many of the contradictory messages which the ascension of middle class concerns to built form entailed. They exemplify, moreover, the condition of self-hatred endemic to his friend Karl Kraus, and to Austrian intellectual culture in general at the turn of the century.

Loos clearly recognized that up through the 1890s, middle class values were often hollow imitations of those values held by the aristocracy, and frequently the idealization of false historicism. His stated respect for the sound values of the aristocracy in regard to artistic taste represents a rejection of the false pretensions which architects and purveyors of the practical arts often offered to the middle classes. Yet, as the educated son of an artisan, Loos unquestionably belonged to the new middle classes. In advocating the enshrinement of practical life and the private realm of the home, and agreeing with the materialist arguments of earlier theorists of *Kunstgewerbe*, he was stating middle class concerns.

Loos was torn between his allegiance to the traditional values of the aristocracy and the practical demands of middle class economic production. This internal conflict was destined to play a central role in his thinking on all matters of architecture and the practical arts. Loos's complex plan to ethicize middle class values is evident from his earliest writings. Because of the impure values of the middle classes, industrial production would produce utilitarian products only in the guise of the transformation of bourgeois axiology. As he put it in his 1897 review of the annual winter exhibition of arts and crafts at the Austrian Museum of Art and Industry, the collapse of class barriers in the

nineteenth century led to a corresponding collapse of taste.⁵ To situate the concept of collapse in its dual context, what Loos referred to is the degeneration of the overall quality in products of the arts and crafts. He also made reference to the related condition that the rapidly growing wealth of the middle classes and the advent of cheap factory production allowed factory producers to imitate to an extraordinary degree the artistic tastes of the aristocracy, a situation which led to every house servant wanting to furnish his home like that of a count. He observed that machine copies were of inferior quality, and the ensuing practice of blindly imitating unusable models sucked the marrow out the bones of contemporary craft.⁶

Loos's attacks on the applied arts were aimed in part at the director of the Viennese Applied Arts School, Josef von Storck, author of the book Alte Möbel für moderne Bedürfnisse.⁷ Loos lamented that both academic and professional design was not advancing with material civilization. Rather, most designers were retreating into spiritual visions of premodern ages, encouraged by the professors of design. In Austria, Loos was alarmed by an ever shrinking number of local products unsullied by the stylistic hysteria of mass production, and even went so far as to claim that the only products which have survived in a healthy condition into the late nineteenth century were those fabricated by the leather, gold and silver trades.⁸ As we will discuss in Chapter Seven, for Loos the only honest crafts remaining in the dual-monarchy were those untainted by stylistic thinking, epitomized by the pernicious influence of the art academies or the commercial atmosphere of the large factories.⁹

Loos's focus of attention on the applied arts was neither isolated nor accidental, and it should not come as a surprise that his earliest writings were focussed on those burning questions surrounding the practical arts which had beforehand preoccupied numerous other writers. His assimilation of architectural matters to those of the practical arts bespeaks the earlier *Kunstgewerbe* debate, and his understanding of architecture and the practical

arts is unthinkable without this vital occurrence. Precisely because he was of mixed-mind as to the advisability of machine production, Loos's anxieties were comparable to those of many other writers taking part in the nineteenth century *Kunstgewerbe* discourse. Loos was caught between aspirations for a material realization of his century's wild productive forces and a nostalgia for coherent, clear expression.

Industrialization was held by most nineteenth century writers at first, and by many for a long time afterwards, to be a threat to civilization, as Loos's description of the dislocations of industrial productive forces makes clear. During the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century the image of the machine was anything but reassuring, and the emergent *Kunstgewerbe* discourse of the 1860s expounded at length the means necessary to restore vitality to the arts and crafts. The rarefied possibilities of material realism, those which found later artistic expression in factory production, were not widely conceived as suitable formal expressions for the nineteenth century. Important transformations in the attitude toward material life were to transpire before some theorists - although evidently not Loos - wholeheartedly accepted machine production. Whereas most writers wanted to adapt forms to functions, many had an unveiled fear of the dislocations which such changes would bring. Specifically, they feared the consequences of individualism, secularism, and industrialization. Responding to this social experience, theories of architecture and the practical arts sought in inconsistent ways to coordinate the bewildering social and economic dislocations which resulted from these phenomena of modernity.

This predicament was the direct result of a monstrous transformation in material relations. As H. Schatteburg wrote in 1893, the discovery of the steam engine was a turning point in the history of man, completely changing the social and artistic relations of human society:

Mit der Erfindung der Dampfmaschine, der Eroberungen auf dem Gebiete der Chemie, Physik, Technik, u.s.w. sind die grossartigen Veränderungen überall eingetreten und haben das Leben und Treiben der Völker, ihre

Ansprüche, ihre Anschauungen von der Welt und von Allen, uns auf ihr vorgeht, geändert.¹⁰

Whereas Central Europe still possessed a thriving peasant culture in the first half of the nineteenth century, it was deemed by many to be destroyed by its latter decades.¹¹

Already, during the early decades of the century, the cheap, and shoddy processes of industrial mass production had left their mark on the hand crafts. The destruction of folk culture was described by Albrecht Kurzwelly as a consequence of the growing incompatibility of urban and rural life:

Die Steigerung des Verkehrs durch die Eisenbahnen und das Umsichgreifen der Industrie auf dem Lande mussten notwendig ihren Rückgang beschleunigen. Die Billigkeit schlechter, aber städtischen Geschmack heuchelnder Industriewaren verdrängte den ererbten Hausrat.¹²

Old practical arts, the hand vocations in furniture, glassware, linens, metalwork, were vanishing.¹³

The challenging issues in the *Kunstgewerbe* debate stemmed from this perception of widespread devastation in the hand trades. Because of the relatively small size of most of handcrafted products and their adaptability for factory production, the practical arts became anathematized by mass production earlier than architecture. Throughout Europe, anxiety about the dramatic transformations of the crafts and hand trades grew, lasting into the twentieth century. A contemporary of Loos's, Carl Neumann described the deleterious effects of mass production: "*ein Stück wie das andere nach dem nämlichen Modell.*"¹⁴ The battle to save the hand crafts, fought most vigorously in England, had limited success on the continent. By 1880, as Heinrich Waentig observed, it was obvious to many that the concerted attempts to invigorate the artistic quotient in crafts design was not succeeding.

Machines could copy just about anything, and were delivering cheap, mass wares:

so kam es, daß das letzte und höchste Ziel aller Bemühungen, die künstlerische Veredlung der gewerblichen Produktion im allgemeinen, keineswegs erzielt war. Schneller als man geahnt, wußte die moderne großindustrielle Technik sich der neuen Formen zu bemächtigen. Es entstand eine Renaissance 'von der Maschine Gnaden,' die als krasse Karikatur ihres edlen Urbildes bezeichnet werden mußte.¹⁵

As the consuming public grew by leaps and bounds, and machine products gained virtual control of the urban marketplace, writers bemoaned a decline in quality of goods and taste of the public.

One place to which German and Austrian writers turned for inspiration was England, and a great deal of ideology in the *Kunstgewerbe* discourse was lifted from English texts. Loos and other earlier German-language writers were well aware of the positions of the major theorists of the English arts and crafts tradition (John Ruskin, William Morris, Walter Crane) and their opposition to the cheap, imitative products of factories.¹⁶ Perhaps the best known of the three in the 1890s was Walter Crane, whose book The Claims of Decorative Art (1892) was translated into German by 1896. Essentially recapitulating the earlier points of Ruskin and Morris, Crane decried the influence of machine production on workers, arts products, and society at large. Machines, destroying the vital forces of creation in a community have led to the loss of the earlier unity of the arts, and an era of disintegration. Consequently, Crane saw the need for a revival of the unity of the arts in handwork, and a reversal of the crass commercialization and specialization which were robbing the worker of all interest in design. For Crane, the practical arts are a living force whose power is derived from the health and well-being of crafts workers. "All really great works of art are public - monumental, collective, generic - expressing the ideas of a race, a community, a unified people; and not the ideas of a class. It is evident enough in our time that art needs some higher inspiration than those of the cash box."¹⁷

Because of England's early industrialization, the English reform movement in the arts and crafts was the first to struggle against the effects of the great industries and mass production, and made concerted attempts to ennoble work. English critics, especially Morris, advocated more stridently for the importance of social change than their German-language counterparts. Far earlier than the Germans, the English discovered, as Crane

emphasized, that the degeneration of *Kunstgewerbe* was an economic, rather than an aesthetic question.¹⁸ While critics from Vienna to Berlin were vigorous in their claim that the practical arts had become degenerate, their attacks were directed more to ugly and useless goods, and less to the deplorable living conditions of the proletariat and mindless mechanical toil of workers. The German position could be better characterized by *volkswirtschaftlichen Pragmatismus*.¹⁹ Clearly, in Central Europe the focus of discourse on *Kunstgewerbe* was not able to challenge the social stratification of society broadly. Despite the writings of Marx and Engels, the German-language discourse on the evils of industrialization remained narrowly focussed on the technical arts, and rarely touched upon broader social issues. As such, it was widely stated that the advent of machine technology had caused people to cease thinking about creating beautiful forms, and concentrate only on making something new. Encompassing all of the technical arts, modern industry was viewed as the producer of articles of fashion, which had no real use.²⁰ Taste had become pure fashion, changing with each season, exhausting finally each reasonable spirit of invention.²¹

Architectural culture also felt the affects of the machine. As the largest, most containing, and abstract of the arts, it had been long considered the link between the other arts and science, between them and economic life at large. As critics were well aware, architecture's long reign was largely the result of the fact that other works of art need a bounded space, one which already serves a determined idea. Architecture therefore defined the overall character for other artworks. Equally important also was the fact that until the late eighteenth century building was by far the largest productive activity in Europe. Thus, all construction and artisanal trades revolved around the production of buildings. The independent growth of the practical sciences and engineering changed this scenario by the nineteenth century. Among theorists, the perception grew that industrial production and commerce and not architecture, orchestrated the judgments of taste

accorded to the other arts. The detachment of architecture from center stage implied disastrous consequences for the other arts. As Ludwig Pfau wrote in his 1866 essay "Die Kunst im Gewerbe", without the guiding hand of architecture the other arts will become refugees in their own land: *"Sobald sich die Baukunst aus der Oeffentlichkeit ins Privatleben zurückzieht, wird die große Kunst heimath- und gegenstandlos, and ist ein Flüchtling in ihrem eigenen Vaterland."*²²

To an unprecedented degree, the ever-increasing complexity of society fragmented building production. Architecture in bourgeois society survived by the chance decisions of the marketplace. Realization of this struck to the core of the historical illusion of architecture as the reference point for communal cultural values. Critics of the practical arts such as Pfau soon came up with remarkable insights into this new state of affairs, and specifically, the relationships between industry and the arts, and those among the arts themselves. For instance, claiming that artistic creativity is an obligation for the educated mind, Pfau insisted that the production of useful objects must not forsake their pleasing aspects. In other words, aesthetics and industry stand too far from each other, and Pfau surmised:

Reinheit und Tüchtigkeit des Rohmaterials, Leichtigkeit und Genauigkeit des Fabrikationsmethode, erfindungsreiche Anwendung neuer Materien und Hilfsmittel, Wohlfeilheit bei verhältnismäßigen Güte sind allerdings Momente von der höchsten Wichtigkeit, nicht nur für den produzierenden Fabrikanten und den plzierenden Kaufmann, sondern auch für das konsumirende Publikum.²³

The beautiful tool honors the purpose which it serves, and raises the common necessity to a free, graceful play.

The diminution of architecture's centralizing function was also blamed for the increasing isolation of the practical arts from the fine arts. It was feared that the practical arts were becoming less artistic. According to K.E.O. Fritsch, the transformation of society into great monarchical states much earlier sequestered architecture from the practical affairs of its community:

Mit der Auflösung der zahllosen mittelalterlichen Gemeinwesen und der Neubildung grösserer Staatskörper unter dem Einflüsse der emporsteigenden Fürstenmacht ging im geistigen Leben der europäischen Völker bekanntlich Hand in Hand das Hervortreten des Individualismus, der losgelöst von den Banden der bisherigen Ueberlieferung und anknüpfend an die Vorbilder der antiken Welt, in dem freien, kühnen Schaffen einzelner genialer Köpfe einer neuen selbstständigen Entwicklung die Bahn wies.²⁴

Fritsch's argument implied that the rise of individualism transformed traditional structures in society, and created harmful divisions between the arts. In particular, it instituted a chasm between the fine arts and the crafts, or handwork. Thus, as the fine arts became more and more a *Luxuspflanze* for the nobility and court life of the kings, handicrafts stagnated, sinking into an almost barbaric *Rohheit und Nüchternheit*.

Later, the threat of the machine accented this growing separation, and was seen as resulting in a two-tier organization of artistic activities.²⁵ Nevertheless, the detachment of the fine arts from everyday life owed as much to the evolution of court society as to industrialization, and received its earliest stimulus from the former. Before the large-scale industrialization of Europe, the growth of art academies and general reinforcement of classical artistic training resulted in the separation of the fine arts of painting, sculpture, and to some degree architecture, from material concerns. The perceived threat from industry only accelerated the escalating isolation of artists from everyday life.²⁶ But, rather than viewing the academicization of art as leading to sterility, as would be the case with Loos and others at the turn of the century, the art academy was initially seen as the only salvation for the practical arts.

The Appeal to History

During the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century, the solid traditions of the visual arts were most identified by writers on *Kunstgewerbe* with the fine arts. With increasing frequency, critics lamented the state to which the hand crafts had sunk, issuing an ever-growing stream of proposals to rescue what was felt to be a dying art.²⁷ These

proposals recommended the academicization of the practical arts, and their dominant feature was to better secure the practical arts by linking them with the academies of the fine arts.

Already at the end of the eighteenth century, associations of artists were formed in Germany and Austria to awaken the public's sense of the practical arts. The model for Prussian reforms in the arts and crafts was London's Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce.²⁸ Under the aegis of these associations, the first exhibition in Germany of the practical arts was held in Berlin in 1822, and the number multiplied over time.²⁹ Similarly, State commissions were established in England and Prussia to recommend the development of drawing schools for *Kunstgewerbe* on the model of the fine arts. In the English schools, at least, the aim of improving the quality of education for the crafts through drawing did not envision thoughtless copying, but the stimulation of independent and individual creations.³⁰ The estrangement of architecture and the practical arts from imagined communal values took on an organic impulse in *Kunstgewerbe* theory. Yet, since the communal values and the art forms which expressed them were lost by the nineteenth century, the tendencies to suture industrial dislocations and restore the organic unity of all artistic activity in society were often historicist. These perspectives resulted in what has been described as the *Vorbilderbewegung*.

Tracing the idea to the early art historian J.J. Winckelmann in the mid-eighteenth century, Barbara Mundt characterizes the use of models as essentially different from any previous work in ornamental engraving and pattern books:

Diese waren modern oder in der Werkstatt erprobte, aber noch gebräuchlich Muster, die sich einzelne Werkstätten als Motivschatz für Formen und Dekor anlegten. Die Vorlagenhefte des 19. Jhs. bringen dagegen Abbildungen von fertigen Geräten verschiedener, immer historischer Epochen, ergänzt durch ebenfalls historisierende moderne Entwürfe.³¹

This historicist view coincided with the marked tendencies we have seen activating the entire grammar of a historical style for contemporary use. As was seen in the previous

chapter, an analogous *Vorbilderbewegung* in architecture turned out a succession of imitative historical styles. Fortunately, in *Kunstgewerbe* the theoretical justification of the *Vorbilderbewegung* was strongly influenced by the theories of Gottfried Semper. Like others of the time, Semper had a profound desire to approach contemporary design problems with an understanding gleaned from the past. Unlike the blatant historicists, however, Semper did not consider the art forms of the past as isolated abstractions, but, rather, as parts of a continuous web of human creation reaching back to the earliest days of mankind. To some extent, it can be said that Semper fought for an elusive synthesis of man's inherent individual identity and his belonging to an established social order.³²

Throughout his critical writings on art, architecture and the crafts, Semper resolved the unrest of historical change - of stylistic turmoil - into a theory of standard, yet evolving types. From the study of the historical development of forms in this way, one realizes that meaningful changes in artistic form are the accidental result of caprice. A basic form (*Grundform*), or type, to put it simply, determines the life and evolutionary movement of subsequent forms through history. Given this theory, Semper came to represent for future generations the philosophical position which represented new creation as occurring through adaptation; the transformation of traditional art through the exigencies of new living conditions.³³

In his essay "Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst" (1851) Semper first clarified this idea of type. He believed that the technical arts, like nature's creations, are based on a few standard types that stem from pre-history and always reappear in new forms. Working from the standard of the natural sciences, Semper observed that since nature is spare in her motives, she renews the same forms through continual modification. Beginning with an original idea, the forms of the technical arts evolve through interaction with worldly forces.³⁴ More specifically, Semper characterized the type as the simplest expression of a basic idea for a form, modified by specific materials and constructive means. Furthermore,

a series of other influences are also important factors in the creation of a type: among them, place, climate, time, customs, peculiarities, rank, and position.

In Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten (1869) Semper's concept of type was constituted more closely to its origins in primitive life. Here, Semper sought for a means of translating such a need into specific architectural forms, or types, which then reoccur - with great variations - throughout history. Given this outlook, Semper identified primordial questions: how did the design of forms in the technical arts evolve logically out of an original need (*der Idee*) in pre-historic times? How are the technical arts based on certain *Urformen* conditioned by a primordial idea which like natural forms offers boundless variety and has its own unique historical evolution?³⁵

In deliberating the relevance of *Urzustände*, what Semper had in mind was the necessity for certain elementary circumstances to give rise to the basic elements of architectural typology. Yet, while cognizant of the physical components underlying type, Semper was most adamant of the dominance of human motivations in design. The idea at the root of a type is the product of man's belonging to a social environment, and his desire to lend his essence to that environment. The meaning of human endeavors, such as art and architecture, then is always comprehended from the vantage point of human motivations. Art resembles language in that it changes as cultures evolve:

Die Kunst hat ihre besondere Sprache, bestehend in formalen Typen und Symbolen, die sich mit dem Gange der Culturgeschichte auf das mannichfachste umbildeten, so dass in der Weise, sich durch sie verständlich zu machen, fast so grosse Verschiedenheit herrscht, wie diess auf dem eigentlichen Sprachgebiete der Fall ist."³⁶

For the primitive technical arts, in the first place, the communicative social need concerns warmth and defense. Hence it is not altogether strange that Semper located his formal core (or fundamental typology) amidst the requirement for a hearth to gather by after a hunt.³⁷ Around the practical and spiritual center of the hearth, Semper had earlier [in "The Four Elements of Architecture" 1851] extrapolated the other three major

building elements: a roof, walls and a mound or terrace.³⁸ These are essential protective devices, and Semper wrote that the "*Beschützerinnen der heiligen Heerdflamme*" must be considered as "*der urältesten Sinnbildes der Gesellschaft und des Menschenthumes in Allgemeinen*."³⁹ The various combinations of these four elements according to the needs of climate, natural surroundings, social relations and different racial dispositions form the basis for the particular stages of architectural evolution. He understood that "*das Werk als Resultat des materiellen Dienstes oder Gebrauches, der bezweckt wird, sei dieser nun thatsächlich oder nur supponirt und in höherer symbolischer Auffassung genommen*."⁴⁰ This relevance of the four elements for subsequent formal development was expounded at great length by Semper. All technical skills are organized around these elements: ceramics (and later metal works), the hearth; water and masonry works, the terrace; carpentry, the roof; textiles, the walls or enclosure.⁴¹

Semper was himself stirred by the possibilities that the 1851 London Exhibition offered, and exclaimed: "*Wie reichen Stoff zu dessen Vervollständigung, zum Vergleichen und Nachdenken, boten auf der Londoner Ausstellung wieder jene bereits angeführten Werke der auf ursprünglicheren Kulturstufen befindlichen Völker*."⁴² Applied to the nineteenth century's attempts to illuminate the meaning of its styles by historical studies, Semper's idea of types held hope for the possibility of tracing back the formal genesis of works of art. Of great consequence was the fact that Semper's intention was all-encompassing. All aspects of the past are important, especially those of pre-history, the *Urformen*, and those primary forms developed from them. It was important to learn from non-European and pre-European peoples. Only by grasping the instinct granted to human works in their most primitive formations, he felt, can we recover each of the simple "*Melodien in Formen und Farbentönen*."⁴³

Semper's Der Stil had an enormous impact on architectural culture in Germany and Austria. Wilhelm Lübke, an important historian and theorist of the German

Renaissance movement, was Professor of art history at the Bauakademie in Berlin. He described Semper's book as showing the correct way to the future by making architects aware of their connections to the other arts. Art history, according to Lübke, once seen as overtly idealistic, in Semper's hands manifestly develops organic connections between all the arts.⁴⁴ In Architektonisch Harmonienlehre (1874), Ed. Wulff appropriated Semper's notion of the building as a living organism through history. Each technical product is the result of material and functional processes which exist over the continuum of history. Architectural shapes, therefore, were understood by Wulff as harmonious organisms created from inorganic nature.⁴⁵ As well, Egon Zöllner's investigation of the organic connection of theory and practice, "Die Bedeutung der Technik" (1883) followed Semper's view of the totality of technological developments in knowledge. Zöllner, who studied design at the Technische Hochschule in Karlsruhe, was convinced that we can only achieve design goals when we understand the complete productive life of a people, their entire culture. To this end, technic must be made an organic member of knowledge, and the technician "*ein Mann werden, der in höchsten Maasse die Verhältnisse des Lebens beherrscht und nach seinen Theile an der Weiterentwicklung der menschliche Kultur arbeitet.*"⁴⁶

Rudolf Redtenbacher's writings on architecture and history in the 1870s and 1880s further underscore the relationship between architecture (and the applied arts) and that dynamical reality displayed as cultural development. He stressed, like Semper, the importance of learning from the past for contemporary creation. One of the magisterial impulses of the latter half of the nineteenth century, under the sway of the operas of Richard Wagner, was to take up the issue of the interdependence of art works as a cultural totality. For Redtenbacher, in the case of architecture, a widening of historical perspective meant both the study of the influences and causal relationships between all buildings in history and the interrelationships between buildings and other cultural and artistic phenomena. Fully in the spirit of Richard Wagner and Semper, Redtenbacher envisioned a

complete history of the development and interrelationships of all human products. In this respect, people and societies were links in a long chain, one which joins the past to the present.⁴⁷ All too often, Redtenbacher lamented, we know too few of the pieces of the chronological chain, causing us to make incorrect linkages, and therefore false designs.

Redtenbacher, born in Zurich, studied the natural sciences before studying architecture under Bötticher in Berlin and Friedrich Schmidt in Vienna. He later worked as an architect in Karlsruhe. His vision of historical knowledge was as boundless as that of Semper. To this extent, Redtenbacher rejected the narrow stylistic confines of most architectural theorists. In criticizing the architectural theories of his time, he observed two paths, both of which are historical, yet neither of which is constructive. The first is that of stylistic fanatics, who close themselves off within the stylistic directions of the past. The second group can be labelled eclectic, who willfully combine elements from past eras. Redtenbacher was clearly opposed to the constraints of a single period style as it makes no sense to copy one style and all its faults. He also felt that random selection from a multitude of past styles will never lead to a logical evolution of architectural forms. To the contrary, in one way or another, any serious study of architectural evolution for Redtenbacher had to proceed beyond a mere taxonomy to a general theory of dominance within the evolution of architectural forms.

This dynamism within the formal languages of architecture was also looked at by Adolf Göller in his Die Entstehung der architektonischen Stilformen (1888). Here Göller extended the discourse of psychological aesthetics⁴⁸ to the architectural styles, and presented a non-teleological theory of historical change.⁴⁹ Marvelling that despite ever-greater historical knowledge of the individual styles, the acolytes of any particular style are still unable to halt stylistic succession, Göller ventured that instability was the recurrent condition of architectural form-making. An understanding of architecture can not be gleaned from a taxonomy of forms, but must emerge within the workings of stylistic

succession among forms. With the experience of philology in mind, Göller approached historical *Stilformkreise* like languages, as products of age-old traditions which we can no longer fully comprehend. Yet, unlike earlier architectural theorists, including Laugier and Semper, who concentrated their efforts on discovering the origins of primal forms, the question Göller posed was: How did later forms arise out of the earlier forms?⁵⁰

The permanence of stylistic succession was also an important consideration to Redtenbacher. What was meaningful to both Redtenbacher and Göller was a super-materialist explanation for architectural form. Yet, Göller was searching for a scientific, and normative explanation of architectural succession. His motive was to de-historicize stylistic succession, and understand the varieties of architectural form through the tools of perceptual psychology. Redtenbacher, by contrast, sought understanding in a historical description of architecture which underscored those most important monuments of the past, the buildings which give rise to the representation of God in Man. On Redtenbacher's account, the reason for a sense of monumentality arises from the need to find in the monument and the sacred altar the departure and essential essence of architecture.

Einen Moment des menschlichen Daseins zu verewigen, die Erinnerung an ihn auf die fernsten Geschlechtern zu übertragen, ein Mal des Andenkens an eine Persönlichkeit und eine geschehene That derselben zu stiften, nicht durch Schrift und Bild, sondern durch einen Bau, das ist die erste und oberste Aufgabe der monumentalen Kunst.⁵¹

Like Semper, Redtenbacher viewed historical understanding as the key to successful design.

For Redtenbacher, in architectural as in cultural affairs, historical understanding tells us much about the achievements and aspirations of mankind's magisterial moments. As we refine our historical knowledge of past cultures, we see an effect in our ability to better conceive the way past cultures conceived beauty, construction, and other building methods. The workings of history exemplify, moreover, not only the recognized artistic forms of the past, but also the undeveloped kernels in history;⁵² those unrealized, but

valuable ideas, which Redtenbacher sees as the task of the contemporary age to bring to fruition. Each previous culture has created forms then, which with the cessation of the reasons of their emergence either withered away or were retained. Their undeveloped motives hold the keys to the future: "*Jede Architektur enthält Motive, welche deshalb unentwickelt blieben, weil der Umfang der ihrer Zeit vorliegenden Aufgaben ihre Entwicklung nicht verlangte...*"⁶³ What is more, each building style contains elements which have been given from natural needs and are still available. Redtenbacher saw the merit of study of these unexplained building ways: "*Wir such mit Recht das allgemein Werthvolle und die unentwickelt gebliebenene Keime vergangener Bauweisen beizubehalten, auszubilden und zu vervollkommen, streifen aber alles blos historisch Bedeutsame als praktisch werthlos ab.*"⁶⁴ This method of Semper and his follower Redtenbacher seeks to conquer the fissures in the cultural fabric of the contemporary age by learning from the unexplored recesses of the past. Here is a past understood not for its political or religious values, as much as for its technical formulations. Reason, they attempt to show, plays as much a role in the development of the technical arts as it does in the natural world. An understanding of the rationale of the technical arts, therefore, denies arbitrary borrowing from the past while encouraging vital sources for creativity.

Before the 1860s, and the publication of Semper's seminal writings, relations between industry and the practical arts had received meager attention. Soon after this time, nineteenth century writers increasingly spoke of measuring needs from inferences drawn from history. A common textual refrain in the second half of the nineteenth century called for the destruction of barriers between the arts in order to restore the organic limpidity of the pre-modern spirit of the arts. Writers on art and culture were fearful that arbitrariness had replaced true purpose in cultural creations, and advocated the concepts of unity and wholeness in opposition to specialization and fragmentation.

In his article, "Wie kann die Baukunst wieder volksthümlich gemacht werden?" of 1876, K.E.O. Fritsch punctuated the evolving debate on the relationship between architecture and the other arts with his concept of *Volksthümlichkeit*. As he saw it, architecture is *Volksthümlich* when its activities form the heart of the total activities of a society. In the modern era, however, along with the other fine arts, architecture became isolated from its former complete *Volksleben*. Like other historicist theorists, Fritsch believed that architecture can only arise from a re-examination of its past inner powers.⁵⁶ As a believer in the regenerative power of long-damaged traditions, Fritsch was interested in re-couping architecture's embrace with the productive industries of the practical arts. The future is changed into an idyllic past. Fritsch advised against a radically new movement in architecture, but rather suggested the importance of getting back on the right track: "*eine schon vorhandene in richtiger Weise weiter zu entwickeln und zum Abschlusse zu bringen...*"⁵⁶ After all, as Fritsch saw it, progress in art and architecture occurs gradually under the unconscious influence of natural powers. New creations will only slowly emerge when artistic production is re-oriented, and is able to awaken the sleeping powers of native genius inherent in the *Volksseele*. This stress on the inwardness of architecture is entirely compatible with his recommendations for its renewal.

What is more, like others within the *Kunstgewerbe* movement, Fritsch conveyed the strong need to unveil the false illusions of modern fashion in architecture and the practical arts. What was needed was education: "*Es bedarf nur einer gründlichen Schulung des Volksgeschmackes und einer systematischen künstlerischen Erziehung des Publikums, um unser Ziel zu erreichen.*"⁵⁷ Later, in "Stil-Betrachtungen" (1890), Fritsch continued his claims for a naturalistic development of architectural forms out of the healthy traditions of the past. A new style will not arise through arbitrary mixtures, but rather through the blending and transforming of older forms and motives.⁵⁸ Sounding much like Semper and Redtenbacher, he stressed that new forms are developed out of older ones, and it matters

not whether we borrow or inherit, but rather whether we understand "*dieses Erbe so auszugestalten und geistig zu verarbeiten*," that we are permitted to consider them as our possessions.⁵⁹

In the language of Semper and his followers, concepts like "modern" and "contemporary" are historicized. The present age, in its broadest sense, is seen as an extension of creative practices extending back into primitive culture. This notion of modernity, more importantly, embodies the idea of material and spiritual fit for artistic relevancy. It relates, as we will discuss in Chapter Five, to Darwinian theories of evolution then becoming popular in the German speaking world. By the late 1880s in German-speaking Europe, the idea of modernism, while apparently opening to ever-more a-historical interpretations, had come to designate a state of creation in which historical forces describe functional selection.

The Applied Arts Museum Movement

Insofar as the notion of historical selection and modification became paramount in the *Kunstgewerbe* discourse, the demonstration of this idea to the public assumed great relevance. For that matter, the entire issue of historical traditions within the practical arts, whether for purposes of outright imitation or materialist historical understanding, became tied up with the new applied arts museums. Extension of historical understanding to the greater public required a great deal of artifactual consultation. If artists, industrialists, and others are to learn, however they may, from history, they must have access to tangible representations from all periods. Thus, the historicist ideology which developed out of the *Vorbilderbewegung* was in large part the impetus for the establishment of the great museums of applied arts in the second part of the century.⁶⁰

As is well known, early events in this arena occurred outside the continent. In 1852, the future core collection of the great English applied arts museum was exhibited at

the Marlborough House (as an outgrowth of the excitement generated by the World Exhibition in London the previous year). A year later, this collection became the foundation of London's new South Kensington Museum, today the Victoria and Albert Museum. The construction of this museum with its ancillary National Art Training School was envisioned as the point of departure for a complete transformation of education in the practical arts. Museum collections and exhibits were to be the expressive vehicle of creative developments in the practical arts throughout the second half of the century. Those interested in the practical arts on the continent, especially in the German-speaking lands were quickly inspired to follow suit. Austrians began preparations for the founding of a similar Viennese museum in the late 1850s.⁶¹

On the momentous importance of the English Museum, Jacob von Falke, the second Director of the Viennese Museum modelled after it, later wrote:

Es sollte dem Künstler dienen, aber ebenso auch dem Publikum, denn man mußte sich sagen, daß die ganze Verbesserung des Kunstgeschmacks in der Industrie umsonst sein werde, wenn das Publikum, dessen Auge und Gefühl durch den Anblick des Schlechten verdorben nicht fähig sei das Bessere zu würdigen, und folglich auch geneigt es zu Kaufen.⁶²

The Vienna Museum's first director, Rudolf Eitelberger, also observed that in the South Kensington Museum, for the first time, he did not sense an exclusive preoccupation with the purposes of the educated classes, but a desire to meet the practical needs of art education and production.⁶³

As the concept for the Viennese museum was being developed, Count Leo Thun was actively reorganizing the state educational system of Austria along English empirical lines. Finally, after the impetus stimulated by Eitelberger's renewed impressions of English ingenuity at the 1862 London Exhibition, the K.K. Österreichische Museum für Kunst und Industrie was founded in 1863 at the behest of the Austrian Emperor in Vienna, and opened in 1864.⁶⁴ A school for the applied arts was added in 1868.⁶⁵ In subsequent years, new museums of the applied arts were founded in large cities throughout the

German and Austrian lands. The main purpose of the new Viennese institution was to awaken the public's interest in art and elevate the *Geschmacksausbildung* of the Austrian consumers, artists, and dealers of crafts products.

According to its founder and first director, Eitelberger⁶⁶, the goal of the museum was to serve the general public involved with the arts: "*Der Zweck eines solchen Museums ist Bildung der Künstler und Kunsthandwerker für Kunst-Industrie durch Anschauung, Benützung und Studium hervorragender oder unterrichtender Werke - also Förderung des Geschmacks.*"⁶⁷ In so doing, Eitelberger hoped to reintegrate the fine arts with the practical arts, and familiarize all levels of society with the great historical products of the *Kunstgewerbe* tradition. Likewise, Jacob von Falke saw the museum's purpose as: "*er will den Geschmack auf vernünftige Prinzipien stellen und das wahrhafte Verständniß des Schönen in Relief und strenger stilisirter Zeichnung, das Gefühl für die Form und lebendige, ächte Farbenwirkung wiederbringen.*"⁶⁸

Historical evolution in theories of *Kunstgewerbe*, as we have discussed them, implied that the guiding reason behind changing artistic forms lies in law-like material and spiritual needs. The lurking fear of industry by these writers was based on the feeling that mass production totally ignores these needs. In his essay "*Kunstgewerbliche Zeitfragen*" (1876), Rudolf Eitelberger found ample reasons to challenge the sordid state of *Kunstgewerbe* at the hands of mass production.⁶⁹ Concerned with what he saw as the replacement of artistic functions by the unartistic mass production of the machine, he had reason to charge that industry now rules the creation of *Kunstgewerbe*. And unfortunately, industry has no sympathy for the needs of the age. Modern industrialists would rather copy old and foreign models than encourage independent thought and creation.⁷⁰ Eitelberger observed that by cheaply copying the hand-made products of the traditional hand crafts, moreover, machine production was forcing these crafts to isolated rural

regions; like the Bukowina in the Austria Empire.⁷¹ And because of the inevitable spread of the machine, this age old *Hausindustrie* would soon suffer a swift death.

As museum Director, Eitelberger predictably found that the improvement of the crafts, of *Kleingewerbe* especially, would only be brought about by the raising of the general level of taste. Indeed, the condition of artistic taste among the public (and especially those segments of it concerned with the production and consumption of art) held explicit value for him. As the quality of local crafts declines, the population will buy either inferior local goods or superior foreign crafts. In the 1860s and 1870s, for example, the educated Austrian public sought its art in the showrooms of Paris and London. Still, for Eitelberger these foreign works were ruled on the one side by *Nüchternheit & Bedürfnisslosigkeit*, and on the other by *Überreizung & Übersättigung*.⁷² What this means for Austrian *Kunstgewerbe* is the complete loss of its artistic tradition, without which neither art nor industry can continue to function.⁷³

The loss of tradition, which so disturbed Eitelberger, could only be countered by a movement to revitalize the numerous artistic traditions of the past, *die Techniken der Alten*.⁷⁴ Like Semper, Eitelberger regarded artistic invention to constitute only a small part of the ability and knowledge with which the artist works. Much more important were the products of a *Bildungsprocesse*. It was easy for Eitelberger to conclude that as all other arts could be revitalized by a historical study of traditions, so could *Kunstgewerbe*.

Aber allerdings neben dem Streben, den Originalen gleichstehende Reproduktionen zu schaffen, ist noch das Bedürfniss fühlbar, die Werke der Alten in die moderne Kunstsprache zu übersetzen oder sie mit Erläuterungen zu versehen, wodurch das Verständniss für die Werke der alten Zeit der modernen Welt näher gerückt wird."⁷⁵

Eitelberger's pedagogical program of translating the works of antiquity into the modern art languages through free imitation and modeling from pattern books was, as we will see, of utmost importance in setting the stage for future development.⁷⁶ G. Portig's Die nationale Bedeutung des Kunstgewerbes (1883) made a similar historicist plea as that of Eitelberger:

to go through the complete artistic treasures of earlier times to create a new style. He also saw as essential the stimulation to be gained for the artist's imagination by the achievements of the past. Thus, Portig disapproved of practical functions appearing in their raw naturalness, and preferred rather that they be "*gleichsam idealisiert und in poesievolles Symbol eingehüllt.*"⁷⁷

Largely out of a mistrust of artistic individuality, Eitelberger's program attempted to develop an objective style through the academic applications of details of historical styles.⁷⁸ As we have seen, his program at the Austrian Museum sought solutions for new building in the adaptation of stylistic forms of the past. Eitelberger's critique was extremely influential in Germany and Austria, and along with the analyses of learned contemporaries like his successor Jacob von Falke, led to a framing of the artistic imagination by the morphological and signficatory systems of historical epochs.⁷⁹ To be sure, both artists and historians during the *Grunderzeit* utilized historical forms as the basis for their designs for contemporary life. Differences lay, however, in both the particular historical models chosen (whether early, mature or decadent), and the degree of artistic interpretation allowed once the historical period had been decided upon.

Under the tutelage of Eitelberger and Falke, the Austrian Museum adopted a philosophical course between that of empirically-oriented England and the Classical-rationalist tradition of France.⁸⁰ Thus, despite inspiration from England on the utilitarian aspects of design, because of the strong historicist leaning at the Museum both Austrians retained a strong allegiance to a French tradition still quite influential in Vienna. Within the German-speaking world, neither of the Viennese Museum Directors were alone in exposing the importance of restoration for *Kunstgewerbe*. As head of the Hamburg Museum of Applied Art, Justus Brinckmann also proposed: 1.) To promote the people's understanding of the historical development of art industry and to have an improving effect upon the formation of taste; 2.) To provide authentic prototypes for the

crafts; 3.) The resuscitation of lost or neglected technical methods; and 4.) The provision of examples of modern art industry.⁸¹

In early writings, Julius Lessing also accorded paramount value to the knowledge of past artistic traditions, and even cast his gaze to the Renaissance for some of the models to be used to create a wholly unique style. Lessing, who studied art history and philology in Berlin, became a Professor at the Technische Hochschule there before being appointed Director of the Berlin Museum of the Applied Arts. Like Eitelberger, Semper, and others who preceded him, Lessing saw at first the worth of the past for the future, and insisted that: "*Man will und muß das Verlorene wieder einbringen.*"⁸² This restoration of former artistic mores owes its urgency to a perception by Lessing that the integral contribution of the past to the present had been cut by events early in the century. Blaming the rupture in artistic continuity on the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, and the radical climate of the nineteenth century, Lessing felt that the first task of artistic renewal would be a re-connection with the old models. Thus it was clear for him that "*zur Bewältigung der gestellten Aufgabe alle verloren gegangenen Gebiete der Technik neu belebt werden müssen.*"⁸³ Yet, despite his recognition of the importance of past models, Lessing was also adamant that in *Handwerk* the complete spiritual rediscovery of past states of mind is not enough, if it is not utterly and in clever ways carried through in an utter consideration of materials and technic.⁸⁴

These latter considerations took salient stature in Lessing's later writings, as he abandoned his early allegiance to traditional models drawn from antiquity. It is clear from a series of his texts, written after his tenure as head of the Berlin Kunstgewerbe Museum in the 1890s, that he believed that the allegories of historical tradition had failed to yield adequate forms for the contemporary age. Sounding much like Loos would a few years later, Lessing wrote:

Bleiben die Grundbedingung lange Zeit dieselben, so erstarrt die Form
schliesslich zur Unkenntlichkeit und erscheint einer späteren Generation

nur noch als Begriffsleerer Schnörkel, und diese spätere Generation ist dann schnell bereit, die ganze Kulturperiode, welche sich solcher Formen bediente, zu den Toten zu werfen."⁸⁵

To put it simply, the ideal of a stable set of artistic forms is not applicable to industrial society. Otherwise, the buildings and objects of the decorative arts become stale and inexpressive of new needs and desires. Lessing was well aware that similar incentives, which seem to drive on this generation, existed for other earlier ones. Those earlier searches (Gothic, Rococo) also utilized new materials, and elements of the animal and plant world. Yet, in Lessing's mind, the vibrancy of those days had past, leading to a state of historicist copying. It appears that Lessing's functional argument sharply contrasts the old and new methods:

die Alten unter uns haben rein alterthümelnd gearbeitet, sie haben sich begnügt, bei der Studierlampe stets nur Erzeugnisse früher Jahrhunderte nachzuahmen bis zur Aeusserlichkeit, bis zum Stumpsinn; die Neuen dagegen sind selbstschöpferisch, sie erklären, daß irgend eine Ueberlieferung überhaupt nicht mehr zu gebrauchen sei, daß die neue Zeit, in der wir leben, ihren völlig selbständigen Ausdruck haben müsse, der aus der Tiefe des modernen Gedankens, aus der frischen sonnenhellen Betrachtung der Natur heraus stets neu zu gewinnen sei.⁸⁶

Such an observation is innovative for the latter decades of the nineteenth century. In calling for the creation of new forms to embrace a new societal mood, Lessing is saying that forms must respond to - and not reject- industrial society. His understanding of the problem of the practical arts in the late nineteenth century revolved around this point:

*"Wir stehen durch die moderne Fabrikindustrie vor einem völlig veränderten Gewerbsbetrieb, aber haben uns nicht entschlossen, unseren Formenkreis diesem Betriebe anzupassen."*⁸⁷ It is apparent that for Lessing the role of tradition in society has been effectively transformed into a contrary metaphysic of the new. What may have seemed to be the center of Lessing's earlier system (historical tradition) had now succumbed to a progressive belief in science and technology. Lessing became convinced of the stirring uniqueness of technology: *"unsere moderne Technik ist derartig kompliziert und leistungsfähig, dass sie gar nicht mehr auf bestimmt abgegrenzte Formen angewiesen ist,*

*sondern sich fast jeden Formenkreises mit Leichtigkeit bemächtigt.*⁶⁸ Because of the power of technology, the drive toward a scientific understanding of nature and artistic forms is all powerful. Everything should be made new, especially the forms of the arts, and Lessing wrote: *"Was man jetzt mit Geschrei verlangt, ist das Abweisen der bisher üblichen Kunstformen."*⁶⁹ For the practical arts, scientific knowledge should be the hallmark of what is actually a process of artistic adaptation of forms to the needs of life. Finally, since we are so removed from the past by our technology, we must create new forms, wholly divorced from those of history to correspond to the new formal vocabulary of a scientific age.

Immersion in Domestic Design

Although Lessing nowhere gave a comprehensive definition of the new scientific and technological design, his writings call for architecture to accord with the natural laws of everyday life. Lessing attached great significance to domestic design. For the design of a house, he rejected the formalist solutions which ignore practical needs: *"Das Zimmer bekommt nicht nur eine andere Farbe und andere Einzelheiten, es bekommt eine Form, die nicht mehr alten architektonischen Voraussetzungen, - der Achsentheilung - sondern von Fall zu Fall dem Bedürfnisse entspricht."*⁷⁰ Likewise, his sentiments on domestic design contain the roots of a philosophy which would regard the individual elements of the house as mechanistic parts of a systemic whole. For instance, he transformed the meaning of a door from a symbolic portal in the ancient sense to the aperture for a host of practical demands.

Domestic design held great interest for other *Kunstgewerbe* theorists, Jacob von Falke being no exception. His texts exhibit continuous interest in the functional production of a house, whose full complexity of internal functions was described in Die Kunst im Hause (1879), and re-emphasized in Aus Alter und Neuer Zeit (1895). Here the objects of

Falke's investigation are the forms of domestic life, and specifically those shaped by the customary habits and patterns of their primary users. Because functional customs are the determining force in understanding the form a house should take, Falke recommended in Die Kunst im Hause that architects design from the inside to outside. Although this leads inevitably to irregular groundplans, Falke was confident that considerations of comfort, ease of movement, and climactic sensibility outweigh the idea of a regular facade.⁹¹ Furthermore, given his artistic interests, he saw that an irregular groundplan encouraged the accentuation of light and shadow, and led to a painterly and picturesque appearance as was common in the Middle Ages.

Given Falke's greater functionalism in the latter article, individual building elements within a house must correspond to their intended use. Windows should take on an assortment of sizes; narrow in the case of the bathroom, wide in the case of the salon. Likewise, the design of rooms should maximize available space for explicit uses. Sleeping rooms should not be entered from one another, but from a corridor so as to increase privacy. As well, *"die unmittelbare Verbindung zwischen Küche und Speisezimmer ist aber nicht ratsam, damit die Gäste nicht von Hitze und Dunst der Küche belästigt werden, daher sich am besten zwischen beide Räume ein schmales Zimmer einschleibt, welches zur Anrichten der Speisen dient."*⁹² In spite of the apparent variety of the forms of domestic living throughout history, Falke apparently came to believe that reason and logic underlay all truthful forms. The forms of architecture and the practical arts, in other words, take on a fundamental character if they conform to use. In using the same analogy as Loos would make a few years later, Falke wrote that the form of a drinking glass must be adapted to its function and material characteristics:

Jede Nation, jede Kunstepoche scheint für das Trinkgefäß ihre eigenen Bildungen, ihren eigenen Geschmack in Form und Verzierung zu besitzen, und die eigene und eigenthümliche Phantasie des Künstlers ist wie mit voller Freiheit hinzugekommen und hat dem Trinkgefäß Formen gegeben...auf welche nur die Laune, die Willkür verfallen konnte.⁹³

Karl Henrici's essay, "Betrachtungen über die Grundlagen zu behaglicher Einrichtung" (1892), was also typical of the emerging concern in the early 1890s to clarify design in regard to internal functions. Henrici, who studied architecture in Hannover, was later Professor at the Technische Hochschule in Aachen. The building boom throughout Central Europe of the preceding decades had created a demoniac obsession on the part of designers to meet upper class social expectations. As the hunt for prestigious appearance wore on, however, the neglect of internal living conditions began to arouse concern. Condemning the same aesthetic and historicist symptoms as structural materialists would, but toward different ends, Henrici recognized the contradiction of his age regarding attention to facades: despite the importance of its formal appearance, behind such sumptuous fronts, decorated with motives from Greek temples or Roman palaces, lay frequently cramped, miserable conditions. Under the impact of these incongruities, Henrici was inclined to believe that external beauty should not be purchased at the price of internal comfort. The generative energy of design must be derived from the plan, and he wrote:

Soll das Wohnhaus den höchsten Grad der Behaglichkeit erreichen, so ist bei jeder Tür, jedem Fenster, jeder Wandfläche, jeder Treppenstufe usw. zu überlegen, wie der Raum am besten auszunutzen sei, wie die Verbindung bequem werde, wie die Beleuchtung am günstigsten falle, wie die Dekoration sich am besten ausnehmen werden - kurz, wie dies alles zu machen sei, damit sich der Bewohner so wohl wie nur irgend möglich in dem Hause fühle.⁹⁴

Facades should not be considered as a completely isolated easel. Similarly, in Palastfenster und Flügelthür (1899), the Director of the Hamburg Kunsthalle, Alfred Lichtwark, examined the design of interior spaces in houses as an attempt to reinforce his demand for a realistic architecture.⁹⁵ As part of the evolving functionalism of the *Kunstgewerbe* discourse, Lichtwark stood as defender of the virtues of the middle class house, which he reasoned could be the sole measure of "*der bürgerlichen und der heimatlichen Baukunst*."⁹⁶ Design cannot be based upon opulent country villas, but

should correspond, as the English show us, to the simple country cottage. By contrast, the external towers, gables, bays, and sculptural ornament of so much recent residential design are represented as false attempts to copy noble splendor, which only result in systematic barbarism. Lichtwark's adversary is obvious: meaning in architecture cannot be derived from faith in Greek Temples or Florentine Palaces.

In the past 25 years, Lichtwark contended, middle class architecture had made great progress in the arrangement of the cellar, kitchen, bathroom, and bedrooms, but not in the case of the living and social spaces of a house. It is precisely Lichtwark's contention that the tyranny of the facade has retarded the objective and comfortable design of internal spaces in the obviously public realm of the house. In the attempt to put to rest once and for all the set of formal assumptions which had governed the genre of interior design, we are told to begin design with the organization of the house foremost in mind, and not the notion of style. The appearance of the facade and placement and size of windows should correspond to the disposition of inner space. The facade should be the expression of the plan.⁹⁷ In this context, Lichtwark called for abandoning the use of the Italian palace window, where it is conceived as part of the facade:

wo es mit den Säulen und dem Gebälk als ornamentale Schmuckform rangiert. Es hat nicht mehr die Form und Grösse, die der Raum verlangt, den es erhellen soll, sondern es muss sich nach dem Rhythmus des Fassadenschemas richten. Es sitzt nicht mehr an der Stelle, wo der Innenraum es braucht, sondern da, wo die Fassade es nötig hat.⁹⁸

With such windows, originating in and appropriate to the Mediterranean climate, rooms receive scant light, reaching only our feet where it is not needed. The palace mentality of interior design, a carry-over from the *Enfilade*, results in far too many doors.⁹⁹ This condition denies adequate wall surface for hanging pictures, and furniture and shelves cannot be arranged suitably. Clearly, Lichtwark's point is that what made sense in a palace does not make sense in a middle class home. For the latter, windows should be high to let in light to the upper parts of the room.¹⁰⁰ Doors should all lead into a corridor so

that one is not forced to access rooms through other rooms. The requirements for a comfortable room mandate windows as large as possible, and doors as small as possible.¹⁰¹

Following in the footsteps of Lessing, Falke, Henrici, and Lichtwark, Loos also required that the architect and craftsman take up use values as his primary concern. Characteristically, Loos framed the gulf between use values and art values as a divide between the true and false in design. For him, the continued mingling of artistic and functional considerations sacrificed the cultural efficacy of architecture in the modern age. As he wrote in "Meine Bauschule" (1907), design must proceed from the plan. Responding to the long tradition of cultural rationalism in the *Kunstgewerbe* discourse, Loos considered that building project must proceed from inside to outside. Thus, he wrote that the ground plan and roof are primary, while the facade is secondary. One must think *im Kubus*, three-dimensionally.¹⁰²

In the article "Das Sitzmöbel" (1898), putting into question the desire for ideals of history and art, Loos had stated his earliest correlation between beauty and function. To be beautiful, he wrote, an object must not violate the boundaries of functionality.¹⁰³ "There is no absolute beauty for the useful object," and we can only judge beauty in regard to the use of an object.¹⁰⁴ Correspondingly, there is no beauty at all for the unusable object.¹⁰⁵ Six years later, in "*Keramika*," Loos returned to the landscape of style and *Gebrauchsgegenstände*. Here drinking glasses act as catalyst to Loos's assessment of the key point, that the best glass is that one which offers me the best taste in drinking. No wonder, then, that for this function Loos was convinced that we would sacrifice gladly all old-German dictums or Secessionist ornament.¹⁰⁶ As we will examine more deeply in Chapter Seven, Loos claimed that stylish ornament promises to delude the mind, as artists derive their inspiration from elevated visions of nature or their imagination.

Unlike artists, Loos claimed that craftsmen do not look to nature to choose shapes or colors. Rather, the craftsman creates as an integral aspect of his activity: "*Aber seine seele ist von farben erfüllt, die sich nur in glasur auf ton darstellen lassen.*"¹⁰⁷ These craftsman's glasses function, unlike those of artists which do not pour properly, which cannot be filled, and which, in short, do not function.¹⁰⁸ And, Loos was emphatic in pointing out that, unlike art products which lose all interest after a couple of years, as their style wanes, functional objects retain permanent value: "*Gegenstände, die das meisterlich, schöpferische gepräge tragen, werden ihren wert stets behalten.*"¹⁰⁹

In "Architektur" (1910) Loos again gave a diagnosis of the preconditions for formal change. By interpreting that form is not created for vanity's sake or form's sake alone, rather with new tasks in mind, Loos held fast to the conviction that only functional uses change forms and break traditions:

Die nervöse eitelkeit war den alten meistern fremd. Die formen hatte die tradition bestimmt. Nicht die formen änderten sie. Sondern die meister waren nicht imstande, die feste, geheiligte, traditionelle form unter allen umständen treu zu verwenden. Neue aufgaben ändern die form, und so wurden die regeln durchbrochen, neue formen entstanden.¹¹⁰

Clearly, during the 1890s, *Kunstgewerbe* theorists had turned away from the general principles of academic composition and historicist imitation which were increasingly regarded as unnecessary evils. The association of *Kunstgewerbe* with use values, and architecture with plan and program were attempts to ennoble these practical arts from a new set of empirical principles. Resistance to an overtly historicist approach to *Kunstgewerbe* within museums was widespread by 1890. In "Die Sammlungen im Kunstgewerbemuseen und ihre Aufgabe" (1887) Bruno Bucher, editor of various art journals and the third director the Austrian Museum of Art and Industry, explored the range of activities brought to light by the brief history of applied arts museums. In previous decades, numerous questions had arisen as to the pedagogical aims of the collections and other museum activities. Which objects are the best exemplars of their

times? Who makes the decisions about which objects would influence current and future taste? Bucher's commentaries were intended to elaborate what he sees as a confusion in the basic program of the museum, its double role: 1) for artists and industry; and 2) as a place for art historical studies. The critique grew out of Bucher's judgment that contemporary concerns are in evident neglect, overshadowed by scholarly aspirations. Thus, rather than providing stimulus for living artistic projects and the contemporary world of industrial products, museums strive for historical breadth. Although the historical collection had been customarily described as the basis for artistic regeneration, Bucher described this orientation as potentially numbing for creativity:

daß durch Anhäufung der vorzüglichsten Originalarbeiten allein die ästhetische Erziehung des Gewerbestandes und die ebenso notwendige Geschmacksläuferung des Publikums nicht zu bewirken ist, ja, daß der Umfang einer Vorbildersammlung thatsächlich zu einem Hindernis für ihre praktische Verwertung werden kann.¹¹¹

Rather, Bucher recommended re-orienting the goals of the applied arts museum from their hitherto dominant emphasis on comprehensiveness and quantity to one of operative intentions regarding contemporary artists and industrialists. Less ambitious historically, the pedagogic worth of the collection would stand much closer in lively debate with the various art industries.¹¹²

Bucher's suggestions to re-align the aims of the Viennese Art and Industry Museum closer to the needs of practical life - like those of its next Director Arthur Scala - emerged from his understanding of everyday life in the late nineteenth century as a unique experience. Contemporary industrial products have created an entirely new world, and Bucher wrote:

Die Art unseres häuslichen, geselligen, geschäftlichen, amtlichen Lebens, unsere Ansichten von Erziehung, von Grundheitspflege und Comfort, von geistigen und materiellen Genossen, die Methoden der Beleuchtung und Heizung, die Fülle von Bedürfnisse, welche durch neue Entdeckungen und Erfindungen geschaffen worden sind, machen es eben schlechterdings unmöglich, uns denjenigen Bedingungen zu fügen, unter welchen irgend eine frühere Zeit das Hauswesen formte und schmückte.¹¹³

We cannot adapt ourselves, to put it simply, to the stylistic constraints of another time. The wholesale import of the antique forms of Rome during the Renaissance, commented Bucher, cut off the natural development of art in northern Europe. The renewed classicism of the early part of the nineteenth century presumably led to the stylistic predicament towards the latter years of the century. We are led to believe that the style of the nineteenth century can neither emerge from such formal borrowing nor from the eclectic combinations which frequently result from an immersion in the styles. Rather, progress results from a Semperian-like evolution of types; *das Fortentwickeln des Vorhandenen, das Umbilden des uns Ueberlieferten*.¹¹⁴

In a later article, "Die Aufgaben der kunstgewerblichen Museen" (1897), on the same themes Bucher encouraged greater harmony between the aims of art history and archaeology and those of creative art. Although the different backgrounds and aims of each provide for certain incoherences, Bucher strongly advocated a balance between the museum's scientific and scholarly aims and its practical calling for today's artistic activity. After all, we are reminded, *"unsere Museen sind weder archäologische Institute noch ausschließlich Magazine für ideensuchende Zeichner, sondern haben den Kunstgewerben die Hilfsmittel der Kunst und der Wissenschaft herbeizuschaffen, und leicht benutzbar zu machen."*¹¹⁵

As Bucher's thoughts make clear, the functional persuasiveness of the theoretical discourse on the applied arts was becoming widespread by in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Yet, resistance to the new continued. As Wilhelm von Bode remarked in 1896, the goals of applied art museums should encompass a museum's status as a collector (or interpreter) of cultural history, and its method of teaching from historical examples: *"Die Ziele bei der Gründung der Kunstgewerbemuseen waren fast ausschliesslich didaktische, technologische; die Wiedererweckung und Hebung des Kunstgewerbes, durch Ansammlung mustergiltige Vorbilder nach allen Richtungen."*¹¹⁶ In an article a year

later, "Kuenstler im Kunsthandwerk," Bode, appointed Director in 1890 of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin, reiterated the importance of the attention given to tradition. Bode, however was forced to admit that many artists in *Kunstgewerbe* (especially in England and the United States) are opposed to the intensive study of old art. From their perspective, wrote Bode, the copying of old forms and methods of decorating does not correspond to the needs of modern life.¹¹⁷

A New Appraisal of the Machine

Unquestionably, Germany and Austria held a different outlook on the industrial machine than did England. While many writers in the German language were not enamored of industrial technology, their resistance in no way approached that of their English contemporaries. What is remarkable about the critique of other German and Austrian theorists of *Kunstgewerbe* was their refusal to reject the seemingly damaged fruits of industrial society. Indeed, Loos noted that for Morris and others, machines belong solely to the work world; and he (the Englishman) tries to keep them far away from his private life. The Englishman prefers a coach to a railcar when travelling in the country.¹¹⁸ Despite this apparent reluctance to accept the machine into domestic life, Loos still never inveighed against the machine with the same comprehensive fervor as English theorists. Even Eitelberger, that champion of historical heritage, responded to industrialization almost completely differently than the English theorists of the arts and crafts. Eitelberger reached into the Classical tradition and contemporary historical pedagogy - and not an idealization of medieval life - to rescue the applied arts. Of enormous consequence to the later development of the practical arts in Germany and Austria, and especially the *Werkbund*, he did not renounce the machine and large-scale factory production. In fact, the entire program of the Austrian Museum and School propounded educating the manufacturing class.

As a consequence, even conservative-minded writers like Bode accepted the inevitability of industrialization. It is perhaps a particularly Germanic attitude which regarded the large industrialists as misguided, and even ignorant, but essential to progress. Recognition of the role that industry had to play in modern life gave Eitelberger the ability to recognize that only in primitive economic conditions could the life of the practical arts survive without large industry and commerce. On this note Eitelberger was crystalline:

Auch wenn wir heutigen Tages die Männer in's Auge fassen, welche im Ganzen und Grössen Kunst und Kunst-Industrie mächtig fördern, so finden wir sie vorzugsweise in den Kreisen der Grossindustrie und des Grosshandels. Es ist daher ganz falsch, sich diese Factoren unseres Gewerbe - und Kunstlebens als in schroffem Gegensatze zu den Kleingewerben, zu den kunstgewerblichen Ateliers und den Künstlern zu denken.¹¹⁹

The role of the state, as Eitelberger saw it, by furthering the public taste and important artistic traditions, propels modern industry into the center of artistic life in the culture. Analogous to the role that universities and academies of fine arts play in the enrichment of the intellectual and artistic life of a society, museums and schools for *Kunstgewerbe* are indispensable for the health of the practical arts. In large measure, the Germanic attitude to the machine represented the comparatively large degree of governmental control over both the economy and cultural endeavors. The state supported the growth of industrial capitalism in Germany and Austria to a wholly greater scale than it did England.¹²⁰

Like those German architects who later supported the goals of national industry by participating in the *Werkbund*, nineteenth century theorists such as Schatteburg bypassed the English rejection of the machine and enshrinement of the hand crafts. Schatteburg's realization of the changing climate of design was accompanied by his exhortation for architecture and the practical arts to adapt to the new world of the machine.¹²¹ Granted, he felt such an adaptation of design would be difficult. In particular, Schatteburg was pessimistic that the small practical arts maker would comprehend the great advantages of

the machine. In attempting to relate modern developments to an overall history of the styles, he admitted the necessity for, but great difficulty in, designing within one's time. The speedy pace of modern life is inconducive to the clear development of a style, in that it "*ist voll verworrenener sich widerstreibender Ansichten, voll unklarer Ansprüche.*"¹²² As long as the ceaseless pace of invention and change continued, architecture would not be allowed the peace of mind it needed to create a new image of itself.

Julius Lessing was more optimistic on the prospects for the machine. Looking in a particularly Germanic way toward the consolidated future of the arts, industry, and nation, Lessing was sanguine, saying that we can't flee into an imaginary Holy land of hand-work before the onslaught of machines. Machines effect millions, and cannot be erased; yet, he added that we must not allow ourselves to be dominated by machines either. The essential question becomes: how do we discover new forms in a mechanized age? Lessing's answer thoroughly stressed constructive forms, those that arise from new materials and technologies, especially iron. This embodied a direct search in the fields of nature, whose garden is renewed new and vibrant each year.¹²³ Tranquil or not, our work has to be based on the practical life of our time. For that matter, Lessing recommended that Germans look to the Americans who have shaped their tools and products in the same spirit as German locomotives and ships, clearly developed out of material and technic. There, pure forms speak pleasingly and directly to our intuition.

Hermann Muthesius's "*Kunst und Maschine*" (1902) went beyond earlier assessments of the compatibility of the machine with architecture, and transposed this connection to a conception of a growth of an aesthetic of the *rein Sachlichen*. Following in the footsteps of Hermann Lotze (to be discussed in Chapter Five) Muthesius wrote that until recently it has been assumed that factory products must be unartistic. Now, this attitude was tottering, and he saw that artistic creation no longer consciously asked whether what was being created was artistic. Rather, since all works must be artistic, he

wrote that it is irrelevant whether a human product is from a machine or a hand. "*Die Maschine ist nur ein verollkommenes Werkzeug.*"¹²⁴

In 1906, Fritz Schumacher concurred with this valuation of the machine as a perfect tool. While Schumacher admitted that the specific type of individual (*Handwerk*) beauty of imaginative forms was not applicable to machines, he found in machines a second type of beauty: "*eine technische Schönheit, eine Schönheit der Logik, die ihre Wurzeln hat nicht in Schmuck, sondern in der ökonomischen Erfüllung der Zweckansprüche, die sich ausgeprägt in der reinen Zweckform.*"¹²⁵ Elegance of form, therefore, is derived from this idea of suitability to function. Because of this idea of a technological beauty, expressed in the forms of the machine, *Kunstindustrie* should not seek to copy hand crafts, but realize its own inherent beauty.

The beauty and exemplary value of machines was forcefully articulated in Friedrich Naumann's *Die Kunst im Zeitalter der Maschine* (1908). Naumann, one of the founding members of the *Werkbund*, offered this small book as a paean to the emerging machine-based society of Germany. Going as far as to describe the industrial landscape of the Ruhr valley as deeply moving from an aesthetic point of view, Naumann considered machines to be the foremost and deepest expressive products of the new German spirit.¹²⁶ While he recognized the disruptions that industrial society causes, and allowed that not all machine-based products are beautiful, Naumann held great regard for what the iron industry. Citing numerous exemplars of the beautiful forms iron has introduced into architecture, many of which we have already mentioned, he was convinced that the new German spirit of architecture receives its truest form when embodied in iron. Concluding his appraisal of the centrality of the machine to all aspects of contemporary life, Naumann wrote: "*Die Maschinen zerstört und baut, sie ändert. Wir alle und unser ganzes Zeitalter sind unter dem Einfluß der werktätigen furenden Räder.*"¹²⁷

Bourgeois Hegemony in an Industrial World

As it unfolded after the 1850s, the discourse on *Kunstgewerbe* maneuvered from questions of a predominantly historical nature to those which gave expression to the practical realities of industrial production and domestic life. This shift can be explained through the oscillating definitions given to cultural relevancy, and the triumph of bourgeois self-confidence. Whereas initially the norms of culture were read in aristocratic mores, the increasing confidence of the bourgeoisie eventually encouraged an appreciation of its own creative activity.

For the discourse on *Kunstgewerbe*, the original turn to historical models represented a rejection of industrial civilization. It may be looked at as an attempt to replace the vacillations of contemporary taste with the stable values of pre-industrial noble civilization. Within the intellectual disciplines, the turn to history was stimulated by the overall historicist climate of German thought in the mid-nineteenth century, and the specifically historicist character of the architectural debate on past styles. At first, historical investigation through the new applied arts museums, encompassing the *Musterbewegung*, attempted to define an identity for the practical arts more in tune with pre-industrial ideals than those harmful realities of modern civilization. Museums filled up with collections of historic models of questionable relevance to contemporary needs.

Historical investigation did not, however, always yield a static picture of the past which could be transplanted to the present. The clarity with which writers were able to identify the features of aristocratic culture diminished with time. As the more dynamic models of material evolution attest, historical empiricism transformed any ideals of the past with which it came into contact. The great collections of practical arts objects challenged a static notion of civilization, and emphasized diversity and progress. As the historical portrait of the past took on greater dimensions, the importance of any single period was marginalized. What became more important than the historical periods or

objects themselves was the dynamic movement of creative forces across time. Moreover, the careful study of historical artifacts for purposes of copying led to a new appreciation of the principles of design. The idea by which writers had imagined the practical arts could not remain a whole, finished object, but became much more the activity of designing itself.

It is not by chance that a preoccupation with the patterns of domestic living arose among writers on the practical arts. If we take into account the motivations for consideration of domestic comfort, it is not hard to understand the far-reaching criticism by Loos and others of the static ground plan. The objects in museums were studied, to put it simply, for their typological, and not stylistic, features. The profusion of furniture models at the museums, and lengthy studies of house ground plans, inspired reflection on modes of habitation and use. The historicist tendency to identify a multitude of house types fragmented the sense of authority conveyed by the classical villa or townhouse. The adoption of the functional values of domestic needs, therefore, is not as much a rejection of history as it is a transformation of bourgeois values through the protracted empirical comparison of historical forms.

On a social level within the *Kunstgewerbe* movement, historical investigation, rather than acting as a passive, conservative agent, also operated as an integrative force. The stated goals of museum education encouraged transformation of the industrial arena, as well as the objects of the practical arts. Involvement with commercial and industrial enterprise meant, however, the diffusion of historical exemplars into the very arena for which history had been summoned as savior. It was logical that as the institutionalization of *Kunstgewerbe* museums was accomplished through its close ties to industry, resistance to the industrial marketplace should fade. The degree to which industry itself changed due to the museum's pedagogy is uncertain. What is more apparent, as we have seen, are the changes of attitudes among the theorists of *Kunstgewerbe* toward industry. Gradually, over time, industry was accepted as a full partner in the design process. The aims of the

Werkbund, of course, represent the culmination of this process.¹²⁸ Ironically, despite origins amidst revulsion at the harmful effects of the machine, by 1907 industrial values had come to occupy a prominent position among theorists of the practical arts.

As the widespread discursive acceptance of machine technology makes evident, by the early twentieth century, writers on architecture and the other practical arts were more accepting of industrial civilization than they had been at any time earlier in the century. The social and technological realities of the machine were evident in all aspects of society, and many writers took this as proof of the tremendous importance the machine held for the design of buildings and other practical art objects. Efforts to establish the foundations for an aesthetic of industrial objects had largely succeeded. Especially within the later years of *Kunstgewerbe* discourse, the understanding of functional and aesthetic categories of design reached an ideological synthesis which would have great significance for the development of the Modern Movement.

As the *Kunstgewerbe* discourse demonstrates, because of an empirical investigation into historical forms, the practical arts were increasingly judged on the basis of utilitarian performance. Still, the concessions made to industry and contemporary reality did not result in the attainment of universal validity for the practical arts. Access to the ideologies of industry and science did not duplicate the stable set of meanings which writers had originally sought in pre-industrial, aristocratic civilization. Rather, the practical arts succumbed, for better or worse, to the myth of modern progress, to a belief in the new. After all, capitalist industry has always been destructive to enduring values. The competitive nature of the marketplace requires novelty. Even the principles behind the myths of scientific/technological progress and eternal meaning are incompatible.

The self-confident assertion of a doctrine of the new by bourgeois writers on the practical arts was not accepted by Adolf Loos. Although his functional attitudes on the practical arts were profoundly influenced by the general trajectory of *Kunstgewerbe*

discourse, someone with his belief in the permanence of meaning could not easily accept a system of transitory meanings. It is partly for these reasons that he was silent on some issues and vociferous on others; that he largely refused commentary on machines, and the actual dislocations inherent in industrial progress, on the one hand, and yet strenuously attacked what seemed to him the ridiculously de-valued principles of art, on the other. If the twentieth century acceptance of the machine equally contained within its axiological contours the profound contradictions of industrial society, the a-industrial designs by Loos into the 1930s will not seem without motivation. Loos was clearly not persuaded by the values of a modernist culture which had forsaken preoccupation with the past only in order to pursue the future endlessly.

Notes

1. It is generally thought that until the middle of the nineteenth century the productive objects that constitute *Kunstgewerbe* were known simply as *Handwerk*.
2. Richard Streiter, Ausgewählte Schriften zur Aesthetik und Kunst-Geschichte (München, 1913), p. 28. Streiter, a native of Munich, studied under Theodor Lipps at the University of Munich and wrote his dissertation on Bötticher's architectural theory.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
4. Joseph August Lux, "Stilarchitektur und Baukunst," Der Architekt 8.1902, p. 47.
5. ILG, p. 29.
6. ILG, p. 29.
7. Rukschcio & Schachel, p. 41.
8. ILG, p. 50.
9. Although in 1908, Loos wrote that the things produced in cultivated lands in the style of our time is about ninety percent. Ten percent - including carpentry - have been lost to the artist, and must be won back. T, p. 76.
10. H. Schatteburg, "Der Einfluss der Maschinen auf das Gewerbe," ABZ 58.1893, p. 67.
11. Of course, industrialization spread unevenly to different parts of Germany and the Austrian Empire. While most sections of Germany, and the Bohemian, Austrian and Styrian lands of Austria became widely industrialized, large areas of Slovakia, Transylvania, Hungary, and the south Slavic lands remained in an agrarian state of affairs till World War I.
12. Albrecht Kurzweily, "Lage und Zukunft der Volkskunst," in Graul, Richard, ed. Die Krisis im Kunstgewerbe: Studien über die Wege und Ziele der modernen Richtung (Leipzig, 1901), p. 91.
13. The industrial specialization of the period after 1850 encompassed textiles, fashions and luxury articles. By the end of the 1850s, certain trades, such as furniture, were greatly commercialized. Bobek & Lichtenberger, p. 40.
14. Carl Neumann, Der Kampf um die neue Kunst (Berlin: Hermann Walther, 1896), p. 15. In contrasting the status of art in pre-revolutionary aristocratic society, Carl Neumann wrote: "Hier war eine altüberkommene, wohlgefügte Ordnung gesellschaftlicher Sitten und Formen, hier waren, da noch keine kontrollierte Sonderung bestand zwischen Staatsvermögen, Krongut und Privatschatulle, enorme Kapitalien flüssig, hier herrschte ein sicherer Geschmack, der jedem Erzeugnis der Kunst von der Stiftskirche und dem Hoftheater bis hinab zu Kirchenbank und dem Sakristeischrank, bis zu den Kleidern, Uhren und Schnupstabaksdosen ein höchst lebendiges Stilgefühl ausgeprägt." p. 12.
15. Hans Waentig, Wirtschaft und Kunst (Jena, 1909), p. 270.
16. PS, p. 38.

17. Walter Crane, The Claims of Decorative Art (Cambridge, Ma: Riverside, 1892), p. 16.
18. Fritz Schumacher, "Ziele der Kunstgewerbeausstellung," [1906] in Streifzüge eines Architekten (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1907), p. 209.
19. For a contemporary discussion of these important distinctions see Hanno-Walter Kruft, who writes: "In Deutschland kam man unter Verzicht auf eine primär gesellschaftskritische Motivation einer Anhebung der Qualität von Gebrauchsgütern für breitere Schichten wesentlich näher." "Die Arts-und-Crafts Bewegung und der deutsche Jugendstil" in Von Morris zum Bauhaus, Eine Kunst gegründet auf Einfachheit, ed. Gerhard Bott (Hanau: Peters, 1977).
28. Karl Henrici, "Die bürgerliche Baukunst," (1892, Tägliche Rundschau) in Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiete der Architektur (München: Georg D.W. Callway, 1905), pp. 87-88.
21. Waentig, p. 234.
22. Ludwig Pfau, "Die Kunst im Gewerbe" in Freie Studien (Stuttgart: Emil Ebner, 1866), p. 420.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 415.
24. K.E.O. Fritsch, "Wie kann die Baukunst wieder volksthümlich gemacht werden?," DBZ 10.1876, p. 383.
25. See Eitelberger, "Über den Unterricht an Kunst-Akademien" in Gesammelte Kunsthistorische Schriften, II, (Wien: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1879).
26. In Prussia, on the French model, an *Akademie der Künste* was founded in 1696, and included courses in architecture, geometry, perspective. In 1786, the Academy was directed to pursue the cultivation of all aspects of the arts and crafts, and finally in 1799 a separate architectural section was established as the Bauakademie. Hermann Muthesius, "Geschichtliche Entwicklung des Kunstunterrichts im XVIII. Jahrhundert," Hohe Warte 2.1905-1906, p. 158. In Austria, in 1773 the diverse Viennese schools of art were united into one institution, the 'K.K. Akademie der vereinigten bildenen Künste.' The new school included sections of painting, sculpture, architecture, copper engraving and metalworking. Although a manufacturer's school had been founded in Vienna in 1758, its absorption into the Academy in 1787 did little to shift the focus of the academic institution's attention to practical affairs of industrial commerce and production. "Kunstgewerblicher Unterricht in Oesterreich im Vorigen Jahrhundert," Blätter für Kunstgewerbe 6.1877, p. 23.
27. Indeed, Waentig commented, "Ein vollständiges Absterben alles Kunstgefühls machte sich in Deutschland bemerkbar." p. 235.
28. Stephan Muthesius, p. 45.
29. The first union of artists and friends was established in 1792 in Nürnberg. J.F. Ahrens, "Die Reform des Kunstgewerbes in ihrem geschichtlichen Entwicklungsgange," in Deutsche Zeit- und Streit-Fragen, ed. Franz von Hoftendorff (Hamburg: J.F. Richter, 1886), pp. 22-23.
30. Waentig, p. 107.
31. Barbara Mundt, "Theorien zum Kunstgewerbe des Historismus in Deutschland" in Beiträge zur Theorie der Künste im 19. Jahrhundert, Volume One, ed. Helmut Koopmann and J. Adolf Schmoll (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1971), p. 321.

32. See Wolfgang Herrmann, Deutsche Baukunst des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts (Birkhäuser: Basel und Stuttgart, 1977), p. 16.
33. E. Zimmermann, "Gottfried Semper und die moderne Richtung," Kunstgewerbeblatt Neue Folge 15.1904, p. 129.
34. Gottfried Semper, Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst; und andere Schriften über Architektur, Kunsthandwerk und Kunstunterricht (Mainz: Florian Kupferberg, 1966), p. 35.
35. Semper, Der Stil, p. VI.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
37. Likewise, Semper saw the fortified camp as the model for all monumental art, for temples, palaces and the planning of entire cities. [Gottfried Semper, "On Architectural Styles" (1869) in The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings, p. 272.
38. Semper, "The Four Elements of Architecture...", p. 272.
39. Semper, Der Stil, p. 6. Semper is clearly following a tradition began by Vitruvius, who wrote that human assembly, interchange and conversation originated by the appreciation by primitive man of the benefits of standing near an accidental fire. Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, The Ten Books on Architecture, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (N.Y.: Dover, 1960), p. 38.
40. Semper, Der Stil, p. 8.
41. Semper, "The Four Elements of Architecture...", p. 103.
42. Semper, Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst..., p. 36.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
44. Wilhelm Lübke, "Die Kunstgewerbe und die Architektur," Blätter für Kunstgewerbe 1.1872, p. 18.
45. Ed. Wulff sharply criticized Semper, however, for masking, and not merely idealizing constructive form. For Wulff, "Die Konstruktion ist der Baum, aus welchen sich sämtliche Style wie Zweige und Blüte nach harmonischen Gesetzen entwickelt haben und entwickeln werden." Architektonische Harmonielehre (Wien: R.v. Waldheim, 1874), p. 63.
46. Egon Zöller, "Die Bedeutung der Technik: und die Technischen Standes in der Kultur," ABZ 48.1883, p. 101.
47. Rudolf Redtenbacher, "Aphorismen über Baugeschichte-Schreibung," ABZ 43.1878, p. 2.
48. See Chapter Seven for a more detailed discussion of this important movement in late nineteenth century aesthetics.
49. See Michael Podro, The Critical Historians of Art (New Haven: Yale, 1982), pp. 55-56.
50. Adolf Göller, Die Entstehung der Architektonischen Stilformen (Stuttgart: Konrad Wittwer, 1888), p. iv.

51. Rudolf Redtenbacher, "Ueber den Begriff der Baukunst," ZPK 37.1877, pp. 195-196.

52. Emphasizing the importance of thoroughness, Redtenbacher wrote, "Und diese Gründlichkeit möchte ich vor Allem darin wünschen, daß der Sinn und das Gefühl fürs Konstruktive mehr geweckt und gepflegt werde... Nur wer die mittelalterliche Baukunst gründlich studiert hat, kann die übrigen Bauweisen der Vergangenheit richtig beurteilen und eine bessere deutsche Renaissance produzieren..." "Die Moderne Baukunst vor dem Forum der Kunstgeschichte," DBZ 19.1885, p. 286.

53. Rudolf Redtenbacher, "Die Baukunst der Vergangenheit und ihre Stellung zur derjenigen der Gegenwart," ABZ 46.1881, p. 19.

54. Rudolf Redtenbacher, Tektonik: Principien der Künstlerischen Gestaltung der Gebilde und Gefüge von Menschenhand (Wien: R. v. Waldheim, 1881), p. 4.

55. To large degree, it was felt that the golden years of German *Handwerk* were during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a time of middle class life during which art was not a work of gen'us but a common good of all. J.H. Ahrens, who expressed these sentiments linked the ensuing separation of the applied and fine arts to the loss of prominence by the middle classes and their overriding domestic concerns. He characterized the earlier period as: "Kurz und gut, eine Werkstatt, in welcher die Handwerker zugleich Künstler waren, und die Künstler es nicht verschmähten, Handwerker zu sein, mußte für die gewerbliche Erziehung und Ausbildung von nachhaltigsten Einfluß sich erweisen." p. 6. Seen in this manner, the separation between the applied and fine arts can be traced much earlier than even the eighteenth century. Ahrens saw the division as occurring during the thirty years war in the seventeenth century; the time of the destruction of thousands of Werkstätten. After this point, high art worked for the castles of the nobility and not the houses of the middle class. Ahrens considered that the situation of the Werkstatt was worst during the late eighteenth century and up to the middle of the nineteenth. "Die Reform des Kunstgewerbes in ihrem geschichtlichen Entwicklungsgange", pp. 6-7.

56. K.E.O. Fritsch, "Wie kann die Baukunst wieder volksthümlich gemacht werden?" DBZ 10.1876, p. 386.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 384.

58. Fritsch, "Stil-Betrachtungen," p. 439.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 440.

60. Among the great predecessors of the applied art museums was the magnificent porcelain collection at Sèvres, France. On the history of the development of applied arts museums in Germany and Austria see Barbara Mundt, Die deutsche Kunstgewerbemuseen im 19. Jahrhundert (München: Prestel, 1974).

61. Around 1859, the *niederösterreichische Gewerbe-Verein* and the *Handels-und Gewerbekammer* began to discuss in earnest the founding of an Austrian Museum for the arts and crafts. Elisabeth Springer, Geschichte und Kulturleben der Wiener Ringstrasse, (Wiesbaden, 1979), p. 260.

62. Jacob von Falke, Geschichte des modernen Geschmacks, (Leipzig, 1880), p. 384.

63. Rudolf Eitelberger v. Edelberg, "Die Gründung des Österreichischen Museums" in Gesammelte Kunsthistorische Schriften Volume Two, p. 85.

64.The Museum was opened with about 2,000 objects, comprising the entire area of *Kunstgewerbe*: precious metals, crystal and glass, ivory, enamels, porcelain, church relics, furniture. To further contact with the outside world, a journal, 'Mittheilungen des K.K. Österreichischen Museums für Kunst und Industrie,' was founded. Eitelberger also launched a Thursday lecture series on topics of art education, and the general awakening of interest in art. Lectures were given by Lützow, Thausing, Van der Null, Ferstel and Schmidt. Jacob von Falke, "Das Kunstgewerbe," pp. 257-260.

65.The School, as the Museum itself, was first housed in an armory. The new Museum building by Ferstel was opened in 1871; not with an exhibit of its collections, but with one of contemporary Austrian *Kunstgewerbe*. An independent School building was completed adjacent to the Museum in 1877. Ibid., pp. 257-260]

66.Eitelberger and his successors at the new museum were indebted to Joseph Daniel Böhm, whose collection of applied art objects was a center of activities among those involved with antiquities in Vienna after 1830. Springer, p. 12.

67.Eitelberger, II, p. 111.

68.Falke, Geschichte des modernen Geschmacks, p. 387.

69.In 1848, Eitelberger lost his position at the reorganized Academy of Fine Arts, and was made professor of art history at the University of Vienna in 1852.

70.Eitelberger, II, p. 274.

71.A few years earlier, Julius Lessing had observed the extant hand trades of the Slavic lands of the lower Danube and Russia. Observing that Russian and other Slavic peasants still decorate their homes in a true style, Lessing saw the valuable preservation of traditions, and expressed as similar sentiment to Eitelberger: "Je weniger Kultivirt ein Land ist, von desto mehr darf man hoffen, bei seinen Bewohner Reste alter nationaler hausindustrie zu finden." Das Kunstgewerbe auf der Wiener Weltausstellung 1873 (Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1874), p. 28.

72.Eitelberger, II, p. 274.

73."Ohne Kunst-Traditionen gibt es weder eine Kunst, noch eine Kunst-Industrie." Ibid., p. 275]

74.Ibid., p. 277.

75.Ibid., p. 284.

76.Ibid., pp. 283-284.

77.G. Portig, Die nationale Bedeutung des Kunstgewerbes (Berlin: Carl Habel, 1883), p. 30.

78.Renate Wagner-Rieger, pp. 150-151.

79.As Elisabeth Springer observes, Eitelberger's approach was embodied by: "Der Kunstgelehrte tritt nun mit dem Anspruch auf, zu bestimmen, was an der Kunst der Gegenwart richtig, das heißt, mit der Kunstprinzipien der Vergangenheit in Übereinstimmung ist. In seinen Angriffen gegen die kunstgewerblichen Bestrebungen unter Leopold Ernst oder Eduard van der Null hatte Jacob Falke eben hauptsächlich bemängelt, daß man so vieles ander als in der alten Kunst und daher seiner Meinung nach falsch gemacht habe. Diese Künstler hatten die freie Erfindung zum obersten Prinzip

erhoben und aus dem Vorhandenen nach Belieben Anregungen geschöpft. Nun stellten die Gelehrten (Falke) objektive Kriterien auf, nach welchen Vorbilder ausgewählt und nachempfunden werden mußten." p. 269.

80.Stephan Muthesius, p. 53.

81.As described by John Heskett, German Design 1870-1918 (N.Y.: Taplinger, 1986), p. 21.

82.Julius Lessing, Das Kunstgewerbe..., p. 10.

83.Ibid., p. 12.

84.On this Lessing commented: "Das moderne Kunstgewerbe ist bestrebt, die Lücken wieder auszufüllen, welche durch den Bruch mit der Vergangenheit in die Kunstfertigkeit unseres handwerkes gerissen ward." Ibid., p. 13.

85.Julius Lessing, "Aus Alten Kultur," DK 1898.2, p. 33.

86.Julius Lessing, Das Moderne in der Kunst (Berlin: Leonhard Simion, 1898), pp. 3-4.

87.Julius Lessing, "Neue Wege" in Kunstgewerbeblatt, Neue Folge 6.1895, p. 2.

88.Lessing, Die Moderne, p. 18.

89.Ibid., p. 5.

90.Ibid., p. 9.

91.Jacob von Falke, Aus Alter und Neuer Zeit: Neue Studien zu Kultur und Kunst (Berlin: Allgemeine Verein für deutsche Literatur, 1895), p. 34.

92.Ibid., p. 32.

93.Ibid., p. 69.

94.Henrici, "Die bürgerliche Baukunst," in Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiete der Architektur, p. 100.

95.Part of the impetus for a re-examination of the home, as Stephen Muthesius points out, may have been the writings of Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl, Naturgeschichte des deutschen Volkes (Stuttgart, Augsburg, 1851, 1854, 1855). Riehl was concerned that the architectural house of the future conform to new social demands, and Muthesius sees in Riehl a forerunner of the *Volks- und Heimatkunstbewegungen* of the early 20th century. p. 76.

96.Alfred Lichtwark, "Palastfenster und Flügelthür," in Eine Auswahl seinen Schriften (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1917), p. 228.

97.Ibid., p. 232.

98.Alfred Lichtwark, Palastfenster und Flügelthür (Berlin: Bruno & Paul Cassirer, 1919), p. 3.

99. Under Francis I, however, a separation of public and private spheres in the home occurred. Individual room types were introduced - such as the dining, music, billiards, library, study, writing, bedroom, reception, drawing or boudoir. Peter Parenzen, in Vienna in the Biedermeier Era, 1818-1848, ed. Robert Waissenberger, p. 110.

100. In a different vein, Henrici had earlier discussed the importance of looking at how the arrangement of light openings best creates a favorable character in a room. He recommended in general that: "Das Licht von oben ist natürlicher und deshalb wohltuender." Karl Henrici, "Betrachtungen über die Grundlagen zu behaglichen Einrichtung," in Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiete der Architektur, p. 21.

101. Lichtwark, Palastfenster und Flügelthür, p. 17.

102. T, pp. 65-66.

103. ILG, p. 82.

104. ILG, p. 83.

105. ILG, p. 84.

106. T, p. 55.

107. T, p. 57.

108. T, p. 55.

109. T, p. 58.

110. T, pp. 110-101.

111. Bruno Bucher, "Die Sammlungen im Kunstgewerbemuseen und ihre Aufgabe," KgbJ Neue Folge 3.1887, pp. 151-152.

112. Ibid., p. 152.

113. Bruno Bucher, "Styl im Zimmer," Blätter für Kunstgewerbe IX.1880, p. 4.

114. Bruno Bucher, "Styl im Zimmer," p. 2. Surprisingly, in view of the value Bucher places on *Heim*, he was concerned with the extent to which international influences on Germanic society throughout history, and particularly during the industrial age. "Gänzlich reinen Bluthes ist ja der Kunststyl niemals gewesen, jederzeit wurde an- und aufgenommen, was man durch friedlichen und kriegerischen Verkehr mit fremden Völkern kennen lernte und nachahmenswerth fand." p. 3.

115. Bruno Bucher, Die Aufgaben der Kunstgewerblichen Museen (Wien: Verlag des K.K. Oesterr. Museums, 1897), p. 9.

116. Wilhelm Bode, "Aufgaben der Kunstgewerbemuseen," Pan 2.1896, p. 122.

117. Wilhelm Bode, "Kuenstler im Kunsthandwerk," Pan 3.1897, p. 41.

118. ILG, p. 95.

119.Eitelberger, II, 311.

120.See David Good, The Economic Rise of the Hapsburg Empire, 1750-1914 (Berkeley: California, 1984).

121.Earlier, Schatteburg had remarked that the full understanding of the modern architectural work will only result from study of the *geistigen Lebensbedürfnisse* and the material needs of mankind, satisfied through commerce and industry, communications and land economy. "Gedanken über Stylbildung" ABZ 53.1888, p. 78.

122.H. Schatteburg, "Eine Skizze zur Kulturgeschichtlichen Entwicklung der Stylarten," ABZ 59.1894, p. 19.

123.Julius Lessing, "Aus Alter Kultur" Dekorative Kunst 2.1898, p. 33.

124.Hermann Muthesius, "Kunst und Maschine," Dekorative Kunst 9.1902, p. 144.

125.Fritz Schumacher, "Ziele der Kunstgewerbeausstellung," (1906), in Streifzüge, p. 212.

126.Friedrich Naumann, Die Kunst im Zeitalter des Maschine (Berlin: der "Hilfe", 1908), p. 18.

127.Ibid., p. 36.

128.On the history of Werkbund ideology see Joan Campbell, The German Werkbund, The Politics of Reform in the Applied Arts (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1978); Sebastian Müller, "Industrialisierung und angewandte Kunst: Deutscher Werkbund zwischen 1907 und 1914" (Bochum: Doctoral Dissertation at the University of Bochum, 1969).

CHAPTER 4

DESIGN UNDER NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FLAGS

Ever since the humanist revival of antiquity during the Italian Renaissance, historians have defined European culture through tensions between its various high and vernacular languages. In the introduction, we described this occurrence in nineteenth century architectural culture as a fundamental opposition between architecture (embodying the classical tradition) and building (more attuned to local needs). Architecture, the high language, was furthered by Alberti, Bramante, and others with classical antiquity in mind. Especially for those peoples north of the Alps, it was also understood as an international style, originating in the Mediterranean lands, but having universal relevance. By contrast, vernacular design was viewed during the centuries after the Renaissance as a low style, emanating from local concerns and medieval traditions. The international relationships of mediocrally-based design in northern Europe were often ignored. Even when nineteenth century writers in the German language began to praise the Gothic style, they conveniently forgot to mention its French origins.

To the degree that the opposition of high and low continued to mold European culture during the nineteenth century, the concepts of international and national came to represent for many writers, respectively, classic and medieval. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, international classicism maintained a hold on most of the important institutions of architecture. It was enshrined in national academies of art and architecture, and by the middle of the century in universities and applied art museums. Nevertheless, despite the dominant status of the international discipline of classicism as the century began, increased cultural contact in the new cosmopolitan cities made inconceivable the continued representation of architectural reality by a monologic source of knowledge. Integral to the modern condition of knowledge is the production of specialized

discourses. Hence early in the century, discussion began on a different set of design issues, representing rational claims for medieval architecture and nationalism.¹ This discourse on nationalism soon found an institutional framework of its own in the preservation movement for medieval monuments, and in attempts to preserve the hand crafts.

As ideologies of modern architectural discourse, the concepts national and international were defined in overt conflict with each other. It is not surprising, therefore, that they also derived their identity through this discursive strife. Viewed in individual cases, however, these concepts rarely designate wholly separate philosophical positions. More often, the textual representations of architecture conducted by concepts of the national and international were colored by an accumulation of interpenetrating ideas, cast from ideological composites. As the case of Loos and other writers on the practical arts will illustrate, neither the national nor international were repeatedly defined in a delimited textual space. Loos's equivocal stance between these two concepts, therefore, is not unusual.

To begin with, the themes of internationalism are not unfamiliar to the discourse on nationalism. In the nineteenth century battle of the styles, reflection on form was intricately laced with a sense of national consciousness. As Germans and Austrians created an identity for themselves through historical reflection, historians and other writers sought to understand individual events as expressions of a collective, or national will. This very idea of nationalism arose from heightened international awareness. In Central Europe, the scholarly aspects of this trend stemmed in part from Winckelmann's conception of the Greek mind and land as the mainsprings of the greatness of Greek art, and even more from the strong connections made by historians between historical development and the nation state.² Much of the Greek Revival in Germany, part of an international occurrence throughout the Western world, was based upon nationalist associations. In a different vein, nationalism also supported medieval tendencies in the

practical arts. Behind the latter fusion stands the discursive preoccupation in architectural circles with the *Volksseele* and the guild tradition of the Middle Ages. The identification of national vigor with architecture exhorted architects to return to the unsullied forms of prior eras of national greatness.

Interestingly enough, one of the defining ideas of the international outlook in the nineteenth century was the powerful urge to lay claim to the sphere of architectural development most advanced for its day. For it is here, rather than in the partial (and limiting) perspectives of a national culture, that architects were confronted by potentially expansive, and previously unknown opportunities. Nevertheless, this expansive understanding of human life was channeled through the established interpretive lenses of a dominant metaphysical or epistemological system. During the Renaissance, the Italian style of classicism spread to Spain and northern Europe through the institutional framework of the Catholic Church, and most powerfully during the decades of the Counter-Reformation. The ideas associated with international classicism were neither always forward looking nor radical.

In defining the international one soon finds ideas drawn from the debate on nationalism. It is evident that the concepts national and international, as oppositions, are necessarily mutually-defining. If their textual definitions were organized around sets of historical phenomena, these proved in many cases to be overlapping. Applied science, to take one example, was no more the exclusive domain of the internationalist faction of architectural culture than was religious ideology unique to the nationalist tendency.³ While internationalists made frequent recourse to empirical observation of human needs, they had relied earlier on non-scientific references to classicism and historicism. Likewise, nationalist discourse was neither single-mindedly anti-machine nor always marked by religious fervor. Its argumentation, while often modelled on medieval building practices and strongly Christian spiritual notions was also conversant with the most up-to-date

developments in the applied science of engineering. Nationalist reasoning, as we saw in Chapter Two, embraced both mystical views of a pre-industrial commune, and technological assessments of building methods. Seemingly contradictory premises were grouped under international and national flags.

French and English Internationalism

Throughout the nineteenth century, the definitions writers gave to national and international partook of different combinations of forms and methods of reasoning. This intricate conceptual intermingling behind national and international positions becomes more lucid when one considers more closely their textual roles. In other words, how were these concepts used to coordinate a description of historical events and buildings? In the case of German architectural discourse, the conceptualization of both national and international was profoundly informed by an awareness of other European states as well as more distant cultures. Since universal discourse on national differences was not possible, writers were drawn to prove their case by dramatizing those traits which contrasted national protagonists. This applied to each of the concepts we are discussing.

As much as Germanic architectural nationalism was dependent upon setting forth a contrasting depiction of another nationality, so too the attempts to define an international outlook shared the discursive tactics of oppositional reasoning. The international outlook of the nineteenth century could only be sustained by first accepting national differences, and then seeking to surmount them through identification with the national representative of a higher developmental phase of culture. Thus, in German-speaking Europe, both national and international positions were refined through speculation on other important nations, principally France and England, but also Italy and the United States.

One writer who exemplified this line of reasoning was Cornelius Gurlitt, assistant at the Dresden Museum of the Applied Arts after 1879, and chair in architecture at the

Technische Hochschule in that Elbe city after 1890. At the turn of the century, the ever-prolific Gurlitt stated that the seminal national tendencies of the nineteenth century were embodied in the distinction between French rationalism and English empiricism.⁴ On the one hand, the French, Gurlitt tells us, found that the only way out of the rapidly declining Rococo was gained by strict conformity to the old laws and traditions of art. Their basic intuition led to the return of pure reason, and laws which cover every caprice. Architecture was ordered with the regularity of the colonnade.⁵ On the other hand, Gurlitt sees the English as storming the classical citadel with weapons of sentiment, feeling, and susceptibility to the soul and beauty. The stress here was on nature, simplicity, and rural-based values. Gurlitt saw German-language discourse, in conformance with its strong dialectical motivations, as caught between the poles of the Classic and Romantic. It became the particularly Germanic trait to attempt a synthesis of these two poles. Yet, Gurlitt reminded us, only Goethe and Schinkel, in the latter's romanticization of Greek antiquity, were able to achieve that.

From what Adolf Loos wrote and built, we know that his philosophy of design incorporated conformity to the enduring classical tradition within an unremitting search for simplicity and functional expression. Seen within this composite space, Loos appears to hold both of Gurlitt's national manifestations. He appears to design in the manner of both the French and English. This is perfectly understandable, given the interchangeable concepts used by architectural theorists to define international and national. Again, the dichotomies between different national characteristics, or between specifically national and foreign traits, occupy intermingling conceptual realms. For instance, the individualistic spirit Gurlitt attributed to the English was seized upon by both proponents of a German national architecture and those espousing cosmopolitan design like that of England. A cluster of interloping concepts and characteristics would be used here, as elsewhere in

nineteenth century architectural discourse, to abstract complex historical states of affairs into a narrative.

Loos held a fascination and admiration for English arts and crafts. He was an unabashed Anglophile and by association an internationalist, owing in part to his travels in the United States between 1893 and 1896 and his brief visit to England at the end of that journey. In the United States, mythically famous for its pragmatism and lack of ideological traditions, he found a healthy cultural environment seemingly lost to Europe, and learned that everything is possible for the designer.⁶ As a consequence, he was very critical about narrow Germanic nationalism, and his design criticism appraised enlightened design as being Western and English. Describing in 1904 how he learned the ways of the West in America, Loos maintained that he would only design houses for persons of such a Western sensibility: "*Das kann ich nur für Leute, die abendländische Kultur besitzen.*"⁷

At the center of Loos's early writings is an inquiry into the facets that constitute modern Western culture - most often English, or American - and correspondingly, those reasons why, since 1815, Austria has not been at the heart of Western culture.⁸ Still, it would not suffice to consider Loos's Anglophilia as solely the product of an affection for the English for their own sake, although there may be some truth to this observation. In a broader sense, his professed purpose in writing about the English was directed at the Austrians. Just the sub-title of his short-lived journal, Das Andere, "a paper for the introduction of Western culture in Austria", manifests his faith in the providential progress of the West, and the unfortunate position of Austria outside that sphere.

Unquestionably, a familiarity and admiration for things English and American is attendant in all of Loos's designs and writings.⁹ Loos juxtaposed with the English love of comfort, their simple and unpretentious taste,¹⁰ the Germanic bourgeoisie's 'preposterous' attempt to live like princes (with rooms arranged *enfilade*). England, Loos wrote, was the first country to take up the battle against historical imitation.¹¹ Part of the reason for

English progressiveness, as Loos explained in Der Architekt in 1898, was that the early industrialization of England led to an early dissolution of *Handarbeit*, and it was naturally there that a reaction first came.¹² Indeed, Loos observed that for the English, working with one's hands was the preferred manner of practice: "*Der Künstler, der das Werk entworfen, stelle sich selbst in die Werkstatt, um es mit eigener Hand auszuführen.*"¹³ Loos accepted to some degree that a like-minded (but incomplete) reformist reaction was apparent as well in France, Germany and Austria during the decades following the first London World Exhibition of 1851.

The importance of this exhibition for the development of a debate on internationalism and nationalism cannot be understated.¹⁴ Discourse in the aftermath of the First World Exhibition at London in 1851 represents a heightened consciousness of international and national forces in both architecture and *Kunstgewerbe*. At this exhibition, and in the long series of world exhibitions which followed, both architecture and the applied arts received a degree of international attention not possible elsewhere.¹⁵ For Rudolf Eitelberger, the world exhibitions signified the true internationalization of design through the communications process:

Durch die Weltausstellungen (1851-1867) bekam das gesammte producierende und consumirende Publikum erst eine deutliche und lebendige Anschauung von dem, was der Weltverkehr bedeutet; es wurde dem Publikum die Höhe der Leistungsfähigkeit klar, auf welchen sich die Producenten befinden müssen, um in dem Weltverkehre eine Rolle zu spielen; es trat ferner der Umstand offen zu Tage, daß das industrielle, künstlerische und geistige Leben nicht mehr einem bestimmten geographisches Territorium, nicht mehr einem bestimmten Lande, oder einer einzelnen Nation angehöre.¹⁶

This situation had tremendous consequences for Central European design. In general, the influence and singularity of the international exhibition can be accounted for by: 1.) its concentration of diverse national trends in a single location, and the intense exposure which resulted from the international context; and 2.) the enhanced possibilities afforded for visionary design, and the diverging trends toward artistic idealization and practical

functionalism.¹⁷ The freshness of the London exhibition, particularly in contrast to its much smaller national forerunners, can be seen in its arousal of awareness of the world-wide conditions of artistic development; and the ability of observers to match up the products of one's own country with those of other lands. Not at all of least importance, it also showed off the high quality of English production to people of foreign lands.

The exhibition stimulated reactions to the reality of a rapidly internationalizing world. For many Austrians and Germans, the London exhibition helped constitute an emerging idea of national design. It called attention, Jacob Falke observed, to the poor quality of their own products, the lack of unity and originality in design which was inspiring characterless imitations, confusion and a mixture of styles.¹⁸ In this spirit, G. Portig later described the World Exhibition at London, and those that followed in Paris, Vienna and other cities as opening German eyes and showing how far behind they were in regard to *Kunstgewerbe*.¹⁹ The advances of foreign peoples, especially the English, were widely greeted as the path to national recovery, and England began to be looked upon as a model for German-speaking Europe.²⁰

Yet, in 1886 J.F. Ahrens, commenting on the 1851 London Exhibition, berated the destructive effects of such internationalism. He described how such sharpened awareness had completely transformed the institution of the applied arts in Europe: "*rüttelte und schüttelte die Kunst Industrie Europa's. Im allgemeinen aber bekundete sich in den Kunstgewerblichen Erzeugnissen der Europäer eine heillose Verwirrung und gänzliche Verwilderung des Geschmackes.*"²¹ Ahrens felt that the wide display of so many different national and historical styles overwhelmed the already poorly established sense of national design in Central Europe. Internationalization, in other words, led to chaos.

Loos's advocacy of English design in the late 1890s was the product of a long tradition of debate on nationalism and internationalism. The establishment of a forum for international design forged fierce nationalist competition in the arts. Awareness of other

cultures culminated in a growth in national awareness, and even sentiment. Especially for *Kunstgewerbe*, the terms of discussion at these great exhibitions were more often those of nations than individuals. The fundamental roots of Loos's belief that there was a center of Western culture was strengthened by the vivid awareness given to national achievement at the exhibitions. Moreover, an examination of texts on the exhibitions and related national design brings up a trajectory of appreciation within German-speaking criticism leading gradually from France to England.

Since the eighteenth century, and until well into the nineteenth, France had been considered by German-speaking people to be the artistic center of Europe. Largely as a result of its centralized government, powerful academic art institutions, and avoidance of excessive Baroque tendencies, France was viewed as the land of pure architectural and artistic tradition. The Roman-influenced French classicism of the *ancien regime* had limited the vitality of the Greek and Gothic revivals on French soil. In the strength of French schools, and the faithful recreation of old models, the crafts were gradually raised to the level of earlier centuries.²² France appeared to Germans and Austrians of the nineteenth century as a land of quiet restraint, solid educational institutions, and steady artistic achievement.

Writing on the Paris World Exhibition of 1867, Friedrich Pecht, an art critic from Munich, characteristically had little praise for native German products. As far as the German-speaking peoples, Pecht credited the Austrians at most for their superior luxury arts.²³ As for the other Germans, Pecht worried that their powerful sense of individualism, and inability to conform to artistic norms, might work against them. Moreover, as the following statement by Pecht shows, individualism in German art was looked at as:

ein gewisses mageres, fleischloses, abstraktes, ebenso zu grandioser
Conception wie zu kleinlicher Ausbildung des Details neigendes, das Ganze
darüber schließlich außer Augen lassendes Wesen, wie es aus unseren

Individualitätssinn, unserm Absonderungstrieb mit Nothwendigkeit hervorgeht."²⁴

His fear of excessive individualism, and the 'ugly and grotesque creations' that can flow from it, was directed primarily against what he regarded as narrowly nationalist tendencies, the Gothic and other medieval styles. Responding to the widespread concern for the fissure between the fine and applied arts, Pecht contrasted the degenerate Gothic with fruitful efforts to regain a connection with traditional sources of artistic authority.²⁵ Much as Eitelberger, Pecht felt that the international classical style represented the essence of a healthy tradition, "*welche die Culturschule für die ganze Welt geworden ist.*"²⁶

It was in France that Pecht found classicism and consequently the sources of artistic strength. Noting the prevailing classical tendencies in the French applied arts, Pecht was encouraged to report from the Paris exhibition that French design can be considered an organic architectural development out of historically-founded traditions. Moreover, he felt that: "*Die französische Kunst hat sich dadurch ein unermessliches Verdienst die Macht, den Einfluß, die Gesittung und Bildung wie den Reichthum ihrer Nation erworben.*"²⁷ For the Exhibition of 1878, Pecht wrote similarly:

daß die französische Kunst fast überall noch die erste Stelle behauptet, sowohl durch die Massenhaftigkeit ihrer Production, wie die durchschnittliche Güte, die vortreffliche Schulung derselben die lateinischen Völker fast unbedingt beherrscht, aber auch auf die fast aller anderen mehr oder weniger Einfluß äußert."²⁸

Reporting on the Vienna World Exhibition of 1873, Julius Lessing agreed with Pecht's assessment of Germany and France.²⁹ France, we are told, continues to stand at the summit of work in the applied arts. Germany, on the other hand, continues to be mired in a state of thoughtlessness.³⁰ Above all, we hear the same general complaint: that our time lacks its own style, that Germans copy and design in a confusing array of historical styles. Lessing blamed this condition on the transformations that machine production made in the crafts, blurring boundaries between different types of hand work, centralizing design without regard to traditional roles.

There is much to suggest that Lessing approached solutions to this problem altogether differently than did Pecht. Worried somewhat about the constraining embrace of French influence, he speculated as to whether the Germans would be able to create a national mark on their products. It would be easy enough to say that Lessing at this time was a budding German nationalist. Far more to the point, though, was the cosmopolitanism of Lessing's primary mission. In this light, he argued that strictly national design is impossible:

aber aus dem Prinzip heraus etwas spezifisch Deutsches schaffen zu wollen, ist bei der nahen Verbindung der Kulturvölker Europas absolut unmöglich und ist auch zu keiner Zeit geschehen, auch zu den Zeiten nicht, die von unseren Romantikern mit Vorliebe als spezifisch deutsch angesehen zu werden pflegen.³¹

For Lessing, in late nineteenth century, it was outlandish to want to create a singular national style. His vision of the international encouraged an expansive outlook, and allowed him to look to Asia, where *"von alten Zeiten her die Behandlung des Formen und besonders der Farben in ungetrübter Kraft erhalten ist."*³² Here, Lessing's concept of the international occupied diverse geographical terrain, dependent only on discovering intact methods of handling artistic forms. To this end, he saw the timeless mores of Asia as more closely corresponding to true artistic ways than the fashion-conscious West. Specifically, in the Oriental fabrics exhibited at the earlier and present exhibition at Vienna, Lessing recognized a subtle understanding in the use of natural plant and animal forms combined with absolute certainty for the modeling of tools and materials. The Orientals, Lessing wrote, are conscious of imitating materials and not falsifying them, of attempting to be true to nature. In the realm of flat surfaces the European debt to the Orient is enormous: *"Sie haben immer nur die orientalischen Muster nachgeahmt, sie allmählig verändert, bis sie zuletzt so entartet waren, daß sie wieder zum orientalischen Original zurückgreifen mußten."*³³

Since the London exhibition and increased exposure to diverse world cultures, one of the ineradicable facts of the discourse on *Kunstgewerbe* during the 1860s and beyond was the rise in estimation of England.³⁴ Most strikingly, as we have already seen in the last chapter, the 1851 World Exhibition in London left lasting changes on the conception and education of arts and crafts in Austria and the German lands. This initial wave of Anglomania persevered to the end of the century. The logical analysis of architecture and the crafts sped forward among the English, and the 1862 Exhibition in London showed the great advances which were possible if science, industry and art could work together.³⁵ Among the Viennese, as we read in his extended essay on the applied arts, "Kunstgewerbliche Zeitfragen," Rudolf Eitelberger regarded England as a model for Austria in particular: "*Für alle Arten von kunstgewerblichen Schulen und Museen ist gegenwärtig England ein Musterland geworden. In diesem Lande paart sich Energie und Intelligenz mit grosser Capitalskraft;*"³⁶

Tied to a weakening of French hegemony in the applied arts, interest in England throughout German-speaking Europe grew rapidly in the 1870s. By 1879, at the next Paris World Exhibition, England exhibited an impressive, and complete portrait of its powerful advances in the applied arts. To a large extent, this advance was directed towards that which is structural and rational in things, and a hitherto unseen correspondence between material and form.³⁷ This development was due, as Heinrich Waentig wrote, to the English cultivation of their native genius: "*Immer mehr gelang es dem Inselvolke, sich fremder Führung zu entziehen und einen eigenen Stil auszubilden.*"³⁸ Continental Europeans, ironically, first gained respect for England on the basis of English individuality and cultivation of its own national traits. An internationalist outlook stressed the progressive character of national identification.

This incongruity is no small matter in a series of writings on English design by Robert Dohme. Dohme studied architecture and art history in Berlin, before working for

the *königlichen Hausbibliothek*. He later became the Director of Berlin's Hohenzollern Museum. It is probable that Dohme's text, Das Englische Haus (1888),³⁹ was a great influence on Loos's Anglophilia. Dohme extended the on-going examination of the English applied arts to the much broader subject of the manner in which English people live at large. He went to great pains to convince his readers of the singular qualities of English life and design. Dohme's text is focused around that most distinctive English insight into living, the single-family house in the countryside. Like subsequent German-language critics, Dohme paid minute attention to the English home out of a conviction that it represents a unique national sentiment which greatly benefited the foreigners' attention. As Dohme saw it, city life anywhere is a struggle, whereas the peacefulness of the countryside represents good living. Greatly to their advantage, and thoroughly unlike continental Europeans, the English have been able to divide their work and family life; and are in the position of realizing life in the countryside. For the upper- and middle-classes who choose to live in the countryside, the English city is only a place of work.

In the countryside, Dohme discovered the English in their most intimate company with nature. This contact with nature enables the English to establish an all-important organic relationship with their environment. The Englishman "*schreibt seine Individualität die Gesetze des Lebens ohne Rücksicht auf den Nachbar und die Allgemeinheit; hier findet er das, was ihm ein besonders wertiges Requisit des behaglichen Daseins ist...*"⁴⁰ Subjection to nature's will forces man to take cognizance of that which is essential to living. It encourages practical decisions. Life outside the city frees man from false pretenses, and the pressures of fashion, those false attitudes and arbitrary decisions which constitute style. For that matter, Dohme wrote: "*Die Form des modernen englischen Wohnhauses ist nichts künstlich durch Mode und Laune Erzeugtes und deshalb Ephemeres.*"⁴¹ Seen amidst the opposition between true life in nature and false fashion in the city the forms of the English house represent the functional organization of life.

Historically, Dohme tells us that the design of country houses, although originally based on an urban model (the hall house), became over time increasingly specialized to the English love of nature and the land. The house expanded into an irregular ground plan as specific rooms arose for family life and servants quarters, and the morning room, library, closets, bathroom, and other specialized spaces came into existence. Responding to modern civilization's slow advance, the specialization of the house's ground plan mirrored the social development of middle class life. This last concept is the high point of English thought. By conforming design to changing ways of living, the English placed emphasis on the ground plan and not the facade. The irregular groundplan is the result of a concern for environmental needs: the orientation of rooms to receive the correct sun angles, for instance. This basic fact reduces the design of the house to a primary determination of its ground plan by the arrangement of rooms on the basis of maximum comfort.

The overthrow of classical axioms represents the new spirit of the English house.

In terms of design, Dohme explained that this is seen in the:

logische Entwicklung des Aufbaues aus dem Grundriß, Gruppierung des letzten lediglich nach Rücksichten der Bequemlichkeit des Wohnens unbekümmert um axialen Parallelismus, Ersatz der Symmetrie zweier gleicher hälften im Aufbau durch wohl abgewogene Kontraste in der Teilen, die ihre rhythmische Lösung in der harmonie oder Gesamterscheinung finden..."⁴²

After all, the purpose of domestic design is to meet its household's needs, and further these needs in as much comfort as possible: "*Das Maßgebende ist lediglich das Bestreben nach größtmöglicher Behaglichkeit in der Disposition des Innern.*"⁴³ Because of this emphasis on comfort, the environmental demands for light, air, brightness and cheerfulness of the total impression are important for both the overall plan of the house and its individual details.

Given its practical orientation, the relative austerity of the English house is patterned on the needs of social life and not the formalistic demands of classical design theory. Hence, English design avoids ostentatiousness and represents a new phase of

culture leading away from the ornament-friendly artistic character of the Renaissance.⁴⁴ Dohme wants us to believe that English design has scant value for great size, monumentality or luxury, but rather fulfilling those requirements which contribute to a house's comfortable existence. He was lucid on this point: "*Weniger Monumentalität mehre Wohnlichkeit, weniger Klassicismus mehr Individualität, konnte man als das Motto des modernen englischen Privatbaues im Gegensatz zu unseren deutschen bezeichnen.*"⁴⁵ It is a given that internal ease of living precedes considerations of external appearance: "*den Aspekt des Raumes im Gegensatz zum Prospekt der Aussicht.*"⁴⁶ Nevertheless, in Dohme's conception of English comfort, the external impression of the house should convey to others that its inhabitants live well. It is no longer possible, or important, to realize an external symmetry of parts. Transforming the classical concern for axial ordering into one for spatial needs, he favored a painterly approach to exterior profiles, and admired the English artistic development of bay windows, which contributes to a better-lit room.

Dohme's admiration for English design, which if taken at face value could be seen as a strongly international outlook, rested upon anti-classicist sympathies. From a belief in the positive results to be gained from an immersion in English design, he drew conclusions strongly relating to local building concerns in Central Europe. The dialectics of the national and international in his writings, like those of Loos, sought to surmount conceptual oppositions. Dohme recommended embrace of a universal, progressive design attitude as the essential ingredient for individual creation attending to local needs.

Following upon Dohme's book, in a series of articles (written between 1892 and 1895), Peter Jessen called attention to the aesthetic and practical merits of the applied arts movement in England. For much of the century, to be sure, Jessen admitted that the same problems of eclecticism which had troubled German *Kunstgewerbe* also plagued the English applied arts. By the 1880s, however, the English seemed to have taken a great lead: "*Die englische Gesellschaft, die diesen Künstlern und ihren Gesinnungen allmählich breitem*

*Boden gewährt hat, ist reicher, einheitlicher, Künstlerisch unbefangener als die unserige.*¹⁴⁷

It may be said that for Jessen - as for Dohme - the English surge was attributable to their systematic observation of and immersion in nature. The applied arts of England, then, create their striking visual imagery out of nature and not history. This is the basic difference between the English and Continental sensibility. Continental design is unable to see directly into nature, enmeshed as it has been in a confusing stylistic discourse for hundreds of years. For that matter, the German applied arts, to their detriment, are addicted to derivatives. As Jessen saw it, they seek to imitate and introduce variation and mixture among historical models.

By contrast, the English sensibility is singular: "*Der englische Geschmack - eine eigene und einheitliche Tendenz.*"¹⁴⁸ Jessen regarded English design as a complex weave of native practical-mindedness and rigorously chosen stylistic influences from the Continent. In contrast to France, which had stood aloof during much of the century's stylistic controversy, England had boasted an active Greek Revival, and perhaps the most extensive exploration of medieval principles in Europe. Nonetheless, despite its clearer affinities to Germany and Austria in the realm of stylistic experimentation, England, thoroughly imbued with Palladio, was admired for the supposed continuity of its artistic traditions. In contrast to Gurlitt, Jessen attributed contemporary English vitality to their disinvolvement with stylistic changes on the Continent.

The major difference between England and the Continent was not style *per se*, but the greatly reduced number of styles which influenced England. The two greatest were Gothic and Classic; all developments in English art emerge out of national traditions in these two styles. For example, in furniture design Jessen tells us that the English stuck with national forms (including Gothic and Classic) and did not borrow from foreign peoples. Jessen believed that due to the reign of a sober classicism during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the English avoided adopting the excesses of the Baroque and the

Rococo. *"Seit dem Empire war es (England) abhängig von Frankreich gehliehen und reproduzierte entweder die Formen des 18. Jahrhunderts oder bewegte sich in einem Rohen Naturalismus."*⁴⁹ Thus what could be called the post-Renaissance in England resulted in a moderate, sober classicism, which wisely avoided the excessive decorative developments of the Baroque and Rococo as they occurred in France and Germany.

Stripped of historical styles, save for the Gothic and Classic, Jessen went on to construct a representation of the English applied arts through the selective employment of the advantages of both styles. To begin with, we are told that the Gothic Revival was the principal basis for the regeneration of national taste in England. On this note, he attributed the rapid rise in quality of English products to the Arts and Crafts Movement and its return to the more natural source materials of the Gothic. While nineteenth century England looked to all sources in attempting to reform its applied arts, it was perhaps most influenced by its own regeneration of a National School of gothicized tapestry, models with stylized leaves and flowers. Nonetheless, Jessen saw the products of the late nineteenth century as not imitations of those in the Middle Ages, but as a great advance:

Das Mobiliar war bequemer als in Mittelalter, die Dekoration mannigfach bereichert, die ganze Wohnung den modernen Bedürfnissen mehr angepasst; statt des eintönigen Eichenholzes die reizenden Kombinationen der bunten Furnierhölzer; statt der einfachen Farben der Gotik eine Fülle zarter Tonstimmungen.⁵⁰

Much of the advancement of the second phase of English realism is due, Jessen ascribed, to direct influences from Asia (and especially Japan). What the English learned most from the Japanese were techniques of ornamenting surfaces. Much as European medieval people, Japanese drew their sources of ornament from the native plant world. Unlike the Middle Ages, however, the Japanese have shown that the stimulation of the plant world lies not in the schematization of isolated forms, but in the naturalistic growth of a whole ensemble, in the living connections between branches, leaves and blossoms, in movements

and intersections.⁵¹ In this manner, the English, instead of solely working from past copies and models were encouraged to create their designs from the direct observation of nature. By doing so, surfaces are enlivened principally by color and the creation of simple, peaceful surfaces; rich decoration is concentrated in only a few places.

Finally, in English classicism Jessen detected the final source of English strength, the forceful creation of functional forms. Specifically, he mentioned the classical preference for straight lines, simplicity of forms, and "*das Übergewicht der zweckmäßigen Einteilung und Einrichtung über den Zierat.*"⁶² Furthermore, Jessen wants us to believe that throughout the past three centuries the practically-minded English concentrated on those aspects of design intended for comfort.⁶³ English classicism, unlike the Continental styles of Baroque and Rococo, had particular interest in domestic comfort. Thus in the English house the layout of rooms is organized around practical needs, and most importantly after the individual habits of its occupants. In the same vein, the English practiced functionalism in the design of tools and furniture, "*meist aber ohne eigentliche Zierformen aus gerundeten Brettern und Stäben gefügt sind, deren gefällige Schwingungen lediglich nach Zweck und Bequemlichkeit bestimmt werden.*"⁶⁴

With an eye to better grasping the English successes, Jessen reminded his audience that all revitalization of the arts must emerge from new creations. Artists must lead the nation. "*Die (English) Hauptsache aber war, dass alle diese Neuerungen von originellen Künstlern ausgingen, und dass noch heute der beste Teil des englischen Kunstgewerbes unmittelbar von den Künstlern geleitet wird.*"⁶⁵ It is pressing that the Germans create something new.

As is apparent in both Dohme's and Jessen's texts, personal individuality, immersion with nature, practicality, and selective cultural borrowing were the cornerstones of English modernism. These concepts became leading motives for German-language architectural and applied arts writers at the turn of the century. Writing shortly before

Loos, Eberhard von Bodenhausen echoed the pan-English line in his article, "Englische Kunst im Hause" (1896). *"Der Drang nach Selbstständigkeit, nach Unabhängigkeit, der den Engländern als Volk und als Individuen innewohnt, findet in dem Verlangen nach dem eignen Hause einen Ausdruck."*⁶⁶ Bodenhausen also commented, in keeping with the Germanic representation of England as a land of people at peace with nature, that as well as being the land of industry and coal, England could be seen as the land of intimate landscapes, the land which epitomized a love for nature.

This ascending pursuit of English mores came to its culmination not only in Loos's writings, but also in the texts of Hermann Muthesius, from 1896-1903 technical attaché to the Germany Embassy in London. His most celebrated work, Das Englische Haus (1904), was an important conduit of English ideas to Germany and Austria during the first decade of the twentieth century. Its main point is that all true art begins in the furnishing of one's home. This is so because the house permits its owner to exercise the greatest degree of artistic freedom. It allows him, to put it simply, to assert his individuality. Reiterating the consensus about the English mentality which developed in Central Europe after the 1880s, Muthesius predictably located the core of English strength in the independence of the individual spirit as expressed in its control of the life within the private house.

Repeating Dohme's ideas on urbanity, Muthesius wrote that the private house is a higher form of life than the apartment of the metropolis, coming closer in contact to nature and the spiritual health that such contact brings:

An artistic culture can only begin with the individual and the individual can only exercise his artistic sense by shaping his immediate surroundings, his living rooms and his house...We shall not achieve our aim by studying the history of art, learning about styles, visiting museums...⁵⁷

Muthesius assented to the general acclaim of Germanic critics who felt that the core of English strength lay in their untrammelled building traditions, and general avoidance of excessively academic issues. In an article on English applied arts written in 1901 as part of a general survey of all Europe, Muthesius described how the English do not stand

opposed to their own history. As practical men, the English learn the historical art of building in direct response to local conditions. Muthesius saw this exemplified in Richard Norman Shaw's vivid naturalness, a design sense which adapts a program for the house to local materials, and working conditions, using locally found stones, and woods.⁵⁸ Whereas on the continent, house interiors are shaped from the standpoint of artistic achievement, in England they avoid a purely artistic impression, and emanate from "*des gefällig gestalteten Bedürfnisses*."⁵⁹

This fact is very important for an understanding of the public's share in architectural appreciation. Because of its transparency to basic human needs and local conditions, the English applied arts and architecture relate much more transparently to the public. Muthesius wrote: "*In England rechnet die Bewegung bereits mit so weiten Kreisen des Publikums, dass sie national genannt werden kann, während sie bei uns höchstens im Studien der Kunst für die Künstler angelangt ist, das grössere Publikum ihr aber nach fern steht*."⁶⁰ Thus, the striving of artists and architects in Germany requires an unusually well educated public, while in England the public need only be familiar with its own rhythms of life and a general understanding of art.

The wave of Anglophilia in the 1890s and beyond was also accompanied by a growing admiration for the English cousins across the Atlantic. In German-speaking literature, America was represented as the model for efficient production. Portrayed as practical, Americans were nonetheless considered unartistic, lacking adequate knowledge of artistic traditions. The decision to follow American design, as a result, was made in light of two opposing questions. First, does the American's lack of the thousand-year old tradition of the Europeans condemn them to irrelevancy as far as higher cultural and artistic matters are concerned? Or, to the contrary, does it allow them a certain freshness and unselfconsciousness in their approach to design which allows them to be truly modern? As Loos and most internationally-minded Germans and Austrians observed, the paucity of

traditions and lack of theoretical knowledge on the arts was America's greatest source of strength. In this light, Heinrich Waentig described the United States as a dream-like environment: "*auf rohe Naturkräfte gestützte, freie Entwicklung und unbeschränkte Gewerbstätigkeit.*"⁶¹

A great deal of European attention on the United States was stimulated by the Chicago Exhibition of 1893, and Loos himself took special pains to visit Chicago that summer. Because of its enormous showcase of American practical ingenuity and industrial fortitude, it was widely felt that the fair played as large a role in shaking up European attitudes on the applied arts as had the London Exhibition of 1851. On this great phenomenon, Waentig wrote: "*Sie brachte eine Reformbewegung in Fluß, die einzelne weitblickende Geiste zwar schon früher eingeleitet, deren Notwendigkeit man aber bisher nicht hatte anerkennen wollen.*"⁶² Likewise, Richard Graul called the Chicago Fair a clear sign of American superiority. Graul, one-time editor of the Viennese journal Graphische Künste, in 1896 became Director of the *Kunstgewerbemuseum* in Leipzig. His extensive experiences in Austrian and German cities led him to a favorable appraisal of American urban life. Whereas Germany was mired in the styles - first having a proclivity for the Renaissance (Wien 1873, München 1876), and then moving in the late 1880s toward the Rococo and Empire styles, Graul saw the Americans practicing a true utilitarian art: "*die Gesetze praktischer und hygenischer Zweckmäßigkeit mit den Anforderungen eines neuartigen und reizvoll individuellen Geschmackes zu vereinen wusste.*"⁶³

In his article "Das deutsche Kunstgewerbe und die englisch-amerikanische Bewegung" (1896), Richard Streiter was also forthright in stating that Europeans have much to learn from both the Americans and the English. In regard to the former, freed from European tutelage, Streiter found a daring, youthful courage to conceive new tasks with a free look and to solve them in a contemporary way without looking anxiously back

at the past.⁶⁴ This characteristic illustrated for Streiter the basic problem with Germanic mentality:

Das deutsche Publikum wünscht für möglichst wenig bald etwas, das 'noch recht viel aussieht,' gleichviel ob die prunkende Wirkung, der Schein des Reichtums, die, künstlerische Ausstattung mit den unsoliden Mitteln in banalsten Ausführung hervorgebracht sind.⁶⁵

By contrast, when the Americans design, for example, gas street lamps, they do not search to recreate the exact details of old stylistic periods. Rather, they attempt to create something new and original through the *"Verschmelzen alter Formen mit modernen Bildungsprinzipien."*⁶⁶ Streiter also commended the superior English sense of comfort, and economy of means. In designing a house, we have much to learn from them: *"die Forderungen der Zweckmäßigkeit, der Sachlichkeit, der Bequemlichkeit, der hygiene..."*⁶⁷ And, Streiter claimed, the English have been able to fabricate products with a machine which do not, as in Germany, attempt to deceive us that they were hand-made. Thus, despite the problems inherent in factory production, the English produce luxury goods of exceptional regularity and smoothness, a simple evocation of elegance.⁶⁸

In 1901, in describing Austrian *Kunstgewerbe*, Fritz Minkus observed that the English influence on Austria has been greater than anywhere else, witnessed by its impact on men's clothing, women's fashions, and even educational principles, and in the replacement of pompous reception rooms by comfortable libraries and studies. The strict functionalism, and tight *Formgebung* of the English makes design in the old Austrian ways impossible. Minkus wrote: *"neue, wesentlich unter englischem Einfluss stehende gesellschaftliche Lebensformen liessen des einen wie den anderen die ceremoniösen Wohnungsausstattungen lang dahin gegangenen Epochen allmählich ungenügend erscheinen..."*⁶⁹

In light of the long tradition of writings on internationalism and later English and American design, Loos's admiration for the United States and Great Britain was not an isolated occurrence. As was the case with so many others, Loos's internationalism - and

preference for Anglo-American design - can be seen to be a product of both functional positivism and romantic idealism. Like English theorists, Loos was wary of the unreliability of historical architectural forms. He recognized that forms in and of themselves do not make a tradition, and saw the necessity of a design critique that corrects the disfigured forms of a lost tradition, dependent as they are on shaky and quixotic views. This assertion is an extension of the Anglo-American empiricist notion that architectural design must be conceived epistemologically and not ontologically. In other words, architectural solutions do not possess a pre-existent reality independent of the design process. Rather, design knowledge is made up of observations, experiments and attempts at solving immediate problems.

Throughout his early writings Loos did not tire of praying to the prophetic English spirit, and in an article for the Wiener Rundschau (1898/99), "Englische Kunst auf der Schulbank," found that the English reveal the backwardness of the Austrian art establishment. After all, for Loos, Austrian students (presumably at the Akademie and Hochschule) had lost contact with the needs that everyday life exerts upon design. Oblivious to the life going on around them, Loos maintained (in the article "Die Englischen Schulen im Österreichischen Museum," 1899) that Austrian students end up disliking the present, turning their gaze back to the Middle Ages and Renaissance. They are useless, capable only of styles.⁷⁰ The English students, on the other hand, are taught to emphasize the authentic use of materials, and avoid excessive mannerism.⁷¹ In their work, art and life complement each other harmoniously.

In a series of articles written in 1897 and 1898, Loos took up the call of achieving - in the English manner- the unity of form and function which the old handwork tradition had possessed. In particular, the new director of the Österreichische Museum für Kunst und Industrie, Hofrat v. Scala, greatly impressed Loos by his Anglophilia and practical emphasis concerning objects of use.⁷² Like-minded in many ways, Loos and Scala

manifested their love for English things in their attitudes toward design and their own dress. Loos's admiration for Scala, no doubt, was a product of the latter's independent frame of mind. Scala, for his part, did not stand too close to the Secession.⁷³ He felt that new art must develop out of the practical requirements of its time, and was wary of metaphysical attempts to conjure up new forms. In this manner, Loos contended that Scala saw to "*den Aufbau einer Österreichischen 'Moderne' auf sichern Boden zu fundieren, in der einzigen bereits hochentwickelten englischen Moderne zu begründen.*"⁷⁴

Much as Scala's program presented the most up-to-date English design at the Austrian Museum, Loos revered England as the model for Austrian modernization. In his article "Englische Kunst auf der Schulbank", English design served as the paradigm for Austria's route of reentry into the modern age: "*Diese alten in England längst überholten arbeiten wirken auf uns wie etwas unerhört neues.*"⁷⁵ Loos was upset that the more reasonable ways of the English has been ignored for so long in Austria, and in "Die Plumber" he admonished Austrian misjudgment of that source for so long: "For a century and a half already we have been receiving our culture secondhand; from the French."⁷⁶ What is more, the English, according to Loos, have been leading the French around by the nose for a long time. Then, in a crude nationalistic turn, Loos germanicized the English, and made them responsible for the restoration of a rightful Germanic culture in the German-speaking lands. "The Romans latinized Germany, but now they (Germans) are requisitioning their own culture back from the English."⁷⁷ Like other writers during the nineteenth century, Loos suggested that the English were the rightful bearers of Germanic culture. That which is international becomes national.

The Debate on Imitation

The vigorous affirmation of modern English design by Loos led to a corresponding abrogation of what he saw as false traditional design. In his review, "Der Neue Stil und

die Bronzeindustrie" (1898), Loos emphasized that Austria possessed a long tradition of excellent design. As far as he saw it, however, the errors of the nineteenth century - bad educational methods at the professional schools among other things - hemmed in the natural development of the applied arts. They have become rotten:

Alles, was frühere Jahrhunderte geschaffen haben, kann heute, sofern es noch brauchbar ist, kopiert werden. Neue Erscheinungen unserer Kultur (Eisenbahnwagen, Telephone, Schreibmaschinen, usw.) müssen ihren bewußten Anklang an einem bereits überwundenen Stil formal gelöst werden. Änderungen an einem alten Gegenstande, um ihn den modernen Bedürfnissen anzupassen, sind nicht erlaubt. Hier heißt es: Entweder kopieren oder etwas vollständig Neues schaffen."⁷⁸

Loos's impulse to bring the compulsive wanderings of nineteenth century stylistic design to an end prompted him to accept imitation. Copying, which Loos saw as an outcome of social conditions, seemed a natural response to unhealthy social conditions: "*Der Wunsch, sich mit Kopien oder Abbildungen alter Kulturerzeugnisse zu umgeben, die einem wohlgefallen, deren originelle aber einem unerreicht sind, ist sicherlich sehr menschlich.*"⁷⁹ Loos noted that copying is a strange activity, but obviously felt that at least it maintains the beauty of the copied objects. Thus, in his flight from the stylistic mannerism of nineteenth century historicism, Loos accepted the rearguard action that imitation represented, if only to develop the skills and extinguish the bad habits of false design. After all, for Loos, assimilation of foreign ideas made perfect sense. If foreign products are better produced, we should take them as our models.⁸⁰

Loos's resort to copying English models followed, as we have seen, the Austro-German tradition of copying historic models in the *Kunstgewerbe* movement. Copying, as such, can have two meanings. In its characteristic negative sense it represents the cheap imitation of quality hand goods by machine production. By contrast, in a positive light, copying constituted for *Kunstgewerbe* theorists the means to unite design with the healthy strands of traditional design. In 1901, as Franz Drobny described the nineteenth century's need to move away from poor design, he was led to accept such healthy imitation of the

latter kind. Most likely challenging the Secession, Drobny wrote: "*zunächst alles unnatürliche, unzweckgemässe, dem Material nicht entsprechende abzuweisen und seinen Geschmack durch Copieren guter moderner Arbeiten zu bilden. Und zwar durch genauer Copieren.*"⁸¹

Two decades earlier, in his text on the Vienna Exhibition of 1873, Julius Lessing put forward a theory of imitation of international design which presaged Loos's principles. Looking to the old ways of the hand craftsman, Lessing recognized the value of creation emerging from imitation:

er benutzt die Formen, welche ihm am handlichen sind, und bildet so allmällig eine neue Mischung heraus, deren einzelne Produkte wir augenblicklich als stilwidrig bezeichnen, indem sie den Originalen, von der sie ausgegangen sind, nicht mehr entsprechen, welche aber schließlich das enthalten, was man als den Stil unserer Zeit bezeichnen wird.⁸²

As in earlier periods, Lessing recommended that culture does not necessarily have to make independent discoveries, but can create a prosperous creative life through the imitation of older models. Two decades later Lessing reiterated that we never take historic forms in their real form, but always build upon them anew. Yet, in a new train of thought, he wrote:

Wenn man in diesen (historic) Formen weiterarbeitet, so sagt man damit, daß man auf den ererbten Schatz tausendjähriger Bildung nicht verzichten will, daß in diesen Formen alles das wiederklingt, was in der Kunst, in der Religion, im politischen Empfinden dem Menschen teuer ist. Dieses Festhalten ist kein gedankenloses Wiederholen, sondern ein tiefgedankliches Weiterleben.⁸³

The change in Lessing's thinking owes to his assessment that our period's advances (technology, archaeology, history, photography) do not allow the necessary degree of arbitrariness in imitating the past. Europeans should realize, "*Dass wir nun und nimmermehr die Verpflichtung haben, in dem Kostüm einer bestimmten Epoche, sei es Renaissance oder Rokoko, herumzulaufen, dass die historischen Studien uns immer nur zu einem Verständnis der bildnerischen Gesetze, aber nie zu bloßen Nachahmung führen sollen.*"⁸⁴ It is essential, if one copies, to copy the truth and not its false substitutes.

In "Das deutsche Kunstgewerbe und die englisch-amerikanische Bewegung," Richard Streiter's recommendation for the introduction and imitation of English and American furniture to Central Europe was based on his assessment that sharing the modern consciousness outweighs national considerations. He is convinced that although the Germanic peoples have their unique history, they will on their own be too slow to create a modern *Kunstgewerbe*. Thus, instead of bothering about the question (do we design after the English? Gothic?, Renaissance or Baroque?) Streiter felt we should ask whether it is functional or not?⁸⁶ If the English applied arts are functional, imitating them is the only course of action. Seen in this way, it is not so much a matter of imitation, but of catching up in the pursuit of practical design which meets our modern needs. Both the English and Americans produce solid, yet light and moveable furniture, adapting design to the needs of modern men. The style of our time, therefore, is the English union of the fine and decorative arts; the direction toward lightness, graceful curving lines, bright sunny colors, flowers.⁸⁶

Later in "Architektonische Zeitfragen" (1898) Streiter again took up the position that it is unthinkable that the gradual building up of a specific modern feeling for style can proceed in secluded national circumstances. The effects of the technological and industrial revolution are the same throughout Europe, and while a *heimische* tradition may be a foundation for new creations, it must not hinder them.⁸⁷ More important than the cultivation of potentially retarding local traditions is the need for Germany to accept foreign currents. "*Ein internationaler Zug geht durch die moderne Kultur, mögen auch die einzelnen Völker mit erhöhtem Selbstbewußtsein sich zusammenschließen...*"⁸⁸

Like other German Anglophiles, Loos saw the English approach to the crafts as praiseworthy. He was unequivocal in his praise of the English: "Who else should be our model: They know what is of use to us, what we ought to avoid, and what we need."⁸⁹ Loos realized that, in reference to chairs, for instance, the English had perfected the art of

relaxation, and hence design different kinds of chairs for the different kinds of sitting.⁹⁰ While Austrian architects only know the profile and ornament, Loos credited the English with showing the Austrians design based on life. "They say to our architects do not draw. Produce! Go out into the world so that you will know what is needed. And when you have understood life, only then take your place..."⁹¹ In renouncing nationalism, therefore, Loos realized that at present the Austrians could do no better than copy the English models: "*Unsere gewohnheiten stehen den englischen viel näher als denen des oberösterreichischen bauern.*"⁹²

Nonetheless, early on Loos was compelled to defend his friend Scala ("Der Fall Scala" in *Die Zeit*, 1898) from what he saw as the reactionary nationalist tendencies of Viennese institutions. Scala's encouragement of English design threatened to cut into the sales of local producers of *Kunstgewerbe*. Predictably, industry and arts groups, including the Tischlergenossenschaft, the Gewerbeverein and the Kunstgewerbeverein were of the opinion that Scala's importing of English models for furniture would destroy Austrian *Kunstindustrie* and eventually the local crafts tradition.⁹³ They even believed that Scala worked for English industry.

Most likely, for Loos the death of the crafts tradition would have been a partial blessing, to the extent at least that it made Austrian industry trimmer and more competitive on a world-wide basis. As to the aesthetic defense of Viennese crafts by their producers, Loos lamented ironically that to the provincial Austrian critics the excellent natural wood qualities and proverbially solid workmanship of the English furniture did not show the accustomed amount of wood.⁹⁴ Spare English design was too sophisticated for the outmoded taste.

Loos went on to claim one year later, in "Ein Epilog zur Weltausstellung" (1899), that in Scala's brief tenure at the Museum he had accomplished more than his predecessors had in the previous ten years. Austrian design was changing under the influence of

English models. Before, every room was designed (by the Tapezierer) as a complete and unchangeable whole in which one was not so much as permitted to put in a new flowerpot without destroying the entire effect, or move any piece of furniture between rooms.⁹⁵

Scala's work showed us that English furniture was both comfortable and adaptable to the myriad circumstances of life. For Loos, such English exact work required no sculptures, gilding, cornices or ornament, as: *"Ich füge nur Bretter zusammen. Genug!"*⁹⁶ It was rooted, rather, in practical considerations of use. Inasmuch as the cosmopolitan way of thinking was an antithesis to nationalism, the open and pragmatic advancement of building in England represented to Loos the science of building perfected.

Loos's defense of Scala's English approach at the Museum für Kunst und Industrie was part of a long battle between nationalist and internationalist tendencies in German-language architectural theory, one which would continue on into the years of National Socialism. As we have mentioned, among the causes of the rise of nationalism in Central Europe was international exposure to comparative nationalities. Many of the principles in English design to which German and Austrian writers called attention were themselves based on national characteristics: strong individualism; a somewhat insular, unbroken building and crafts tradition; and a keen appreciation of local cultural and environmental conditions. This appeal to English qualities, furthermore, envisioned the island nation as possessing a holy alliance between nature and culture in the pursuit of the Modern. Seen in German and Austrian eyes, the English manner was a smooth synthesis of seeming contradictions, a reconciliation of extremes. To this extent, the English showed the Germans how to be true to themselves and their own building environment. Understandably, such internationalism led to a greatly enhanced interest in national traits, and the concurrent argument: learn to produce within German culture as the English have within theirs.

The Nationalist Reaction

As Loos was well aware, the Austrians and Germans found no complete substitute for their peculiar cultural desires in England. Even Peter Jessen in 1893, whilst acknowledging advanced English design, said that we Germans must be aware that we cannot merely copy the English style.⁹⁷ Nonetheless, the Germanic approaches to grasping local culture were by no means unified. Overall, there was a great agreement as to the importance of the societal will as the stimulus for design. Yet, strong disagreement existed as to its precise sources. On the one hand, anticipating a theme of the international Modern Movement, writers emphasized a scientific analysis of societal needs, and espoused expression of all of the features of modern life, especially industrial production. On the other hand - following, in a sense, the lead of England - the emerging folk movement in Germany as well as Austria rejected machine civilization, and rallied around a romantic disavowal of modern life, which became embodied in the search for folk roots. Both movements, originally inspired by exposure to the international scene, turned sharply to considerations of national conditions. What they found in national needs, however, was completely different.

The dominant point in Karl Scheffler's "Ein Weg zum Stil" (1903) was that architecture must correspond to the contemporary social system, that of the modern city. The city that the architectural writer Scheffler, who studied at the Academy of Fine Arts under Hansen, van der Nüll and Siccardsburg, had in mind was Vienna. Apart from the ambiguities found in modern urban life, Scheffler found enough characteristics to deduce a basic architectural prototype, and stated that the future of our design lies in a uniform city architecture. It is clear to Scheffler that the times when architecture belonged to a single family and a determined purpose, as was the case in rural England, are over. Hence, continental Europeans cannot follow the English example of private villas since the needs of Europeans much more closely require the urban multi-story block. If architecture is

actually concerned with building apartment houses, ruminations about the single-family house serve no purpose. Apartments need to be flexible to changing human needs, since renters change locations frequently.

Heute werden die Stadthäuser auf Vorrat gebaut, man wohnt während eines kurzen Lebens in zwanzig verschiedenen Wohnungen, die alle in Prinzip möglichst gleichartig angelegt sein sollen, damit die Lebensgewohnheiten keine Aenderung erfahren. Die Unterschiede im Grundriss verwischen sich immer mehr, ja, die ideale Forderung der städtischen Bauweise ist ein ganz uniformen Grundriss für Wohnungen gleichen Mietpreises.⁹⁸

Not nature or an imagined spiritual past, but the contemporary social system is of paramount importance.

Because of the constancy of task and the unity of appearance, in reality only one architect is at work: "*das allgemeine Bedürfnis des Gesamtwillens, die soziale Kräfte.*"⁹⁹ In a thought process similar to that of Otto Wagner, Scheffler suggested that since architecture must respond to the changing living demands of the contemporary city dweller, uniformity must be the principal for city dwelling. The goal of new city design is unvarying, city apartment blocks. *Kulturlosigkeit* results when a people do not have the courage to recognize their own form of living, when they build half in old and half in new. It leads to self-deception.¹⁰⁰ The uniformity Scheffler proposes is modelled on that of the machine. Uniform exactitude in products of art and the living patterns of people could not be possible without the machine as metaphor. As described in Scheffler's words, Central Europe, understood later by most twentieth century historians to have been the most fruitful grounds of European modernism, seemed ready to unify and rationalize its arts under the ideology of industrial logic.

Earlier, we saw that the assimilation of machine production elicited different responses in Austria and Germany than in England. While Central Europeans roundly condemned the machine's de-personalizing aspects and its dissolution of traditional culture, their critique stopped short of complete rejection. To an important degree, theorists of the

Kunstgewerbe movement in the 1890s sought to recast the world of the applied arts within that of industrial commerce. Still, the influential energies of Wagner, Scheffler, and Muthesius, in harmony with the world of the machine, represented only one strand of Germanic thought. Poised against this growing pursuit of scientific and technological knowledge, this embrace of urban life, stood a counter movement. This latter crusade of German nationalism, known also as the arts and crafts, peoples or *Heimat* movement, also occupied the attention of Central Europe well into the twentieth century, and constantly posed an alternative vision of the future to that of industrial modernism.

While equally determined that design conform to the local characteristics of nineteenth century Germany and Austria, the German nationalist movement defined those features quite differently. It is true, that like the scientific vision of a unified world culture based upon verifiable knowledge, the nationalists also proposed a theory of authentic unity. In their interpretation of the romantic principle of unity, however, they differed greatly from the empirical, scientific outlook. The romantic ideal, as understood by A.W. Schlegel, preoccupied itself with the powers of the soul, and an individualistic striving for beauty and perfection. Therefore, while the single products of nature may differ in their appearance, the inner spiritual contemplation always points in a collective direction.¹⁰¹ For the proponents of an Austrian or German style of national design, the perplexing interrelationship between concepts of individuality and collectivity in Schlegel became a starting point for their concept of beauty. In other words, the fusion of these opposed concepts into a unity would become a cornerstone of a supposed Germanic idea of art.

Prepared by the theoretical principles of the Gothic Revival as expounded half a century earlier by Rosenthal, Reichensperger and Wiegmann, *Heimat* theorists were intensely nationalistic, and very conscious of what was specifically German in their architecture.¹⁰² Their vision of building and artistic needs rejected the foreign yoke of scientific education. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the *Lebensphilosophie*

movement, represented by Nietzsche and Dilthey, had prepared the ground for this attitude. As Hans-Joachim Hubrich observes, this philosophical movement reacted against rationalism, propagating belief in irrational values, a will to Germanness, the demand for a complete work of art; "*das Unheimliche der Natur*."¹⁰³ To some degree, it provided the theoretical foundations for several artistic developments of the 1890s: the hedonistic aestheticism of decadence, dilettantism, and eclecticism.¹⁰⁴

Such nationalism within architectural culture, as elsewhere, was greatly stimulated by the publication of the book Rembrandt als Erzieher in 1890, which in time became a landmark work in the development of German nationalism. Its author, Julius Langbehn, in sharp contrast to the scientific uniformism encouraged by Scheffler and others, was a champion of individualism. Seeing in it the root of all art, he envisioned a future which would arise out of the eccentric character of the German people: "*Die treibende Grund- und Urkraft alles Deutschtums aber heißt; Individualismus*."¹⁰⁵ Rejecting the scientific path towards the future, Langbehn stressed that the roots of the German people must be found in the past, and in particular, the achievements of its great artists. For Langbehn, the German past contained a "*hoher Grad von Unregelmäßigkeit, Vershobenheit, Eigenartigkeit*," all the qualities of the artist's inner heart.¹⁰⁶

All through the 1890s and beyond, the growth of nationalist sentiment among Germans and German-speaking Austrians was intense.¹⁰⁷ By 1903, Ludwig Hevesi would write that the great ethical and aesthetic gain of the modern age was the discovery of the individuality of men.¹⁰⁸ Much of the new-found interest in German nationalism was centered around the concept *Volk*, or people. Combined to form a series of powerful metaphors for nationalist design - *Volksseele, Volkskunst, volkstümlich* - the abstractions were defined around an opposition between supposedly age-old values rooted in the German peasant culture and those traits considered foreign to the land. A changeable collection of non-German characteristics, this latter group included everything from

classicism to industrial production. A case in point of the new attitude surrounding Volk is Albrecht Kurzwelly's article, "Lage und Zukunft der Volkskunst" (1901). Here the author defined it as:

Der Begriff 'Volkskunst' wurde geformt von Sammler, der plötzlich an dem naiven Bauernhausrat der Vergangenheit und den Erzeugnissen der ländlichen Industrie gefallen fand, und vom Historiker, der den Typen des Bauernhauses und der Volkstracht nachforschte.¹⁰⁹

To this end, Kurzwelly advocated that Germany requires a national art, derived from the spiritual feelings about art in the German people.

Another major figure in the folk art movement in Germany was Robert Mielke, whose major work was Volkskunst (1896). Mielke was originally a painter, and later became an active writer on the arts in Berlin. As Karl Henrici described Mielke: "*er will in die Kinderstube des deutschen Volksgeistes eindringen, um dort den Form- und Farbelementen nachzuspüren, welche in der naiven Zierungsweise namentlich der deutschen Bauernkunst enthalten sind, um an sie wieder anzuknüpfen.*"¹¹⁰ Indeed, Mielke required that art speak a language which is not only understandable to the masses, but also profoundly moving to them. Such a people's art depends heavily upon its connections to what Mielke termed the natural individuality of a people. Despite this necessity, all around him, the signs of a true people's art were missing. The desired unity between individual and nation no longer existed. A real sense for art is hard to find in the 1890s, Mielke surmised, especially among those urban, educated classes who have greatest control over the art market.

As with other nationalistic thinkers, the causes of the lack of unity were to be found in degenerate foreign influences. The overwhelming influence of foreign artistic traditions (including the Antique, Oriental, Italian Renaissance and Baroque) on German architecture throughout the nineteenth century led Mielke to conclude that Germany had lost control of its artistic destiny. Tracing this pattern of influence back to the "Thirty

Year's War" (1618-48) when the German lands were torn apart by religious and dynastic wars, Mielke understood the aftermath as one of continual foreign domination:

Der Krieg hatte fast überall die Kunstthätigkeit auf Jahrzehnte hin unterbrochen und als sie später auf gewerblicher Basis wieder in der Stadt aufgenommen wurde, geschah es nicht im Sinne der alten Ueberlieferung, sondern es brachten neue ausübende Elemente ein fremdes Kunstempfinden in das Land, das zuerst verblüffte und dann später wie eine Schmarotzerpflanze das nationale Leben erdrückte.¹¹¹

Such foreign domination had led to the importation of concepts of beauty and taste which were not pertinent to the concrete lives of Germans. It had also imposed the foreign style of classicism on the northern landscape. In a theoretical sense, abstraction had replaced, "*das volksthümliche Individualismus*."¹¹² Given his longed-for image of an independent, tradition-minded countryside, Mielke disapproved of the academies, philosophers, art historians, and professional architect (who instituted the "Alpha and Omega of the Acanthus leaf"), and instead stressed the role of dilettantism. For him, and subsequent theorists of local building ways, the main corrective force which can shape German art is the unbridled, naive peasant spirit. The arts, as a consequence, must spring from a collective *Volksempfinden*.

Unlike cosmopolitan theorists who urged adoption of the advanced artistic techniques of England or France, Mielke was deeply suspicious of overt cultural borrowing. Eschewing the societal analyses of the English theorists Morris and Crane, he held that the German people were still a peasant society. This disavowal of societal transformation, set forth by the strongly idealistic Mielke, was to be a powerful force in the emerging *Heimat* movement. For in this movement, the idea of nationalism was throughout tied both to a rejection of industrial civilization and a return to the simple ways of *Bauernkunst*. True art can only rise from the national people, as imported art never stirs the national soul: "*Das Kunstgefühl ist noch bei keinem Volke von oben her durch eine fertige Formensprache verallgemeinert worden, sondern es mußte immer von unten herauf geweckt und genährt werden, so daß es umgekehrt erst diese erzeugte*."¹¹³

In Volkskunst, Mielke forcefully posed an opposition between approaches to building in the city and countryside. We are told that a city person's life is dictated by ceaseless change, and fashion. Yet, the art of the city, despite its apparent variety, is actually uniform as far as its foundational cause: the industrial complex. Mielke did not, however, like Scheffler, exalt this uniformity. What he hoped for was a romantic ideal of the national unity of peasant individuality. The art of the peasant, by contrast to that of the city dweller, is rich and ignorant of urban superficialities, and deeply connected to traditions, community and the land; *"der Bauer behütet aber mit Eifersucht seine stammeseigenthümlichkeiten, seine sozialen sonderbildungen."*¹¹⁴ In the specificities of peasant architecture are to be found the manifold of the unified German spirit.

To an extraordinary degree, Mielke understood peasant culture as the basis for a regeneration of art and architecture throughout Germany. Throughout his text, the pure air of the countryside is offered as an escape from the degenerate culture of the cities. Peasants, as carriers of the national soul and identity, are therefore the natural carriers of a national style in the arts. Predictably, Mielke found his models for a peasant artistic culture in the simple, rural house, and its accompanying crafts:

Das echte Bauernhaus hat eine ethische Bedeutung, weil in ihm einerseits durch die Anordnung der Wohngelasse, andererseits durch die echt volksthümliche Gestaltung des einheimischen Materials derart Reflexe der deutschen Volksseele gesammelt sind, daß es neben dem Bürgerhaus der Vergangenheit zu einer starken Stütze nationaler Kunst und nationaler Geistes wird.¹¹⁵

Like the English arts and crafts theorists, Mielke hoped for a renewal of German arts based on the principles of simple wood or masonry homes, with their naturalistic shape and practical forms. Nonetheless, while he accepted that industrial civilization was not a temporary phase, he chose not to view industrial society as essentially different from its peasant origins.

This brand of nationalism and belief in the German people's spirit gained great appeal towards the year 1900. The full implications of Mielke's theory were taken up by

the *Heimat* movement with which Loos in 1907 found himself in conflict.¹¹⁶ The question of the importance of nationalism for architectural design is directly at stake in Robert Neumann's Architektonische Betrachtungen eines deutschen Baumeisters (1896). In this work, Neumann posed the burning question of the day: must architecture be national to express the aspirations of a people? In answering in the affirmative, Neumann associated the ability to create architectural forms to the profundity of the national soul, the *Volksseele*. Appropriately, for Neumann, all art will achieve its chosen task when the impression of its works come towards the peculiarity of its *Volksseele*. It is essential, therefore, that the artist himself stand firmly within the contours of this spirit, and we hear from Neumann that: "*Je lebhafter Gefühl und Bewußtsein seiner Nationalität in dem Gesamtwesen seiner Persönlichkeit zum Ausdruck kommt, desto kräftiger überträgt es sich auf seine Werke.*"¹¹⁷ This confrontation of a people with the task of giving form to materials has occurred throughout human history.¹¹⁸ Each people has historically expressed itself in a different national style. Be they Gothic or Renaissance, the architectural forms of any singular place should find their appropriate forms in the character of their people. This has always been the case, in that the people of a land, so long as they retain an independent life, always maintain their *eigenthümliche Formgebung*.¹¹⁹

For Neumann, what illuminates materials and makes architecture reach spiritual heights is artistic drive. What is more, culture's important task is to fulfill art's need to serve the highest purposes of humanity, that of expressing the consciousness of a nation's individuals. Art, wrote Neumann, finds justification in national desires, in a manner so: "*daß die Kunst in allen ihren Formen tief in das Volk, in alle seine Schichten und Verzweigungen eindringe und das im Volk lebendige Sehnen nach höherer Gestaltung des Daseins durchleuchte.*"¹²⁰ Like speech, Neumann regarded the formal language of architecture as lying deep in the national character. Thus architecture in each land

possesses its own unique vocabulary- *"So muß auch der Architekt auf die (alte) Formen zurückgreifen, die frühere Zeiten, verwandte Volksstämme zum Ausdruck verwandten Gedanken benutzt haben..."*¹²¹

The mission of Neumann's text was to assert the remarkable destiny awaiting the German people. Writing with no small measure of national pride, he professed that no people have a stronger national spirit than do the Germans. This spirit, aroused by unification a quarter of a century earlier, led to a reawakening of the German national spirit, and stimulated a movement to design architectural forms in a purely German national sense. But, irregardless of Germany's potential, Neumann found that German people of his day were alienated from their architects and did not even know the names of their building designers. German architects were out of touch with the aspirations of the nation at large.

Germans, in other words, have lost the sense of their national mission. It is the task of the writer to set them on the right track. Falsely, they extract entire formulae from the past, connecting their own aesthetic perception with those of historic peoples. Neumann cautiously emphasized that today the Germans have changed as a people; the old clothing of the Middle Ages or even the German Renaissance no longer fits. Germans, says Neumann, can take from the past only that which conforms to our present essence. What Neumann has in mind is a history which reveals the whole mosaic of forms of the past, out of which strands still relevant can be chosen to create contemporary paths to expression. After all, over the course of history, the German spirit took possession of different means of construction. It is no small matter for Neumann that architects must learn how the German spirit was incorporated into the works of their forefathers, and must then learn to work themselves in the same sense: *"Auf dem Boden, den die uns vorangegangenen Generationen bestellt haben, müssen wir weiter arbeiten, aus diesem allein lassen sich brauchbare Früchte ziehen."*¹²² But, what makes up the character of the German people?

Similar to Mielke, Neumann perceived particular character traits as unique to people of the German nation. Equating design with adherence to national character, he characterized German architecture as possessing: 1) a predominance of content and thought over the form in the representation of art works; 2) a stress on truth, and forbidding of all false appearance; 3) the powerful emergence of individual uniqueness; 4) a lively feeling for nature, and sense for the painterly; 5) the benevolent acknowledgement of foreign traits; and 6) the strict critical examination of German superiority and achievements.¹²³ Above all, these characteristics were based upon a fundamental opposition between the Germanic and Latin peoples. Here, Neumann repeated the century-old dictum that Latins excel in plastic arts which express nature's exterior side. By contrast, Germans are said to excel in poetry and music: *"Die Germanen und in Sonderheit die Deutschen sind das Volk der höchst entwickelten Geistigkeit und der tiefsten seelischen Empfindung."*¹²⁴

Neumann defined Germanness through contrasts with the Mediterranean world. German peasants, in contrast to southerners who dwelled within walls, lived freely in the countryside, where they drew their fierce sense of individuality. German ornament, then, is the result of a proclivity of the single stone mason for the *Ornamentbildung freiere Hand*. Likewise, during the German Middle Ages, building received the strong personal stamp of an individual builder. *"Auf der Ausbildung der Persönlichkeit ist daher die Grundbedingung aller geistigen Entfaltung, auf der individuellen Thätigkeit beruht aller Fortschritt, alle Entwicklung der Menschheit."*¹²⁵ In contrast to the ancient buildings which feature complete unity and rest, simple linearity and symmetry, the German landscape encourages movement, variety, unrest, *"das gesteigerte Hervorheben der Kontraste."*¹²⁶

The Genealogies of Architectural Identity

The Austrian landscape, to an extent greater than the German, epitomized the natural features upon which Neumann's national concept rested. Many of the same nationalistic arguments made in Germany found a receptive ear in Austria. Austrian cultural and political life from the 1870s until the demise of the Empire, as it is well known, was characterized by vast conflicts between nationalities. But for Austrians as a whole, the answer to the nationalities questions was not as clear as it was for Germans. It was impossible to ignore the fact that the total Austrian ethnic landscape offered few of the easy oppositions between Latin and Germanic that we have just seen were used by Germans. Many citizens of the Empire adopted a narrow view, and based their national identity upon language (and frequently religion). Consequently, many architects and artists who spoke German identified with German nationalism. Although the use of the German language in the court, bureaucracy and army gave it a prominence over other languages, in a wider sense this fact did not mean that being Austrian was equated with being a German national. Alongside the clamor of German, Slavic and Magyar nationalism, the House of Hapsburg remained as a trans-national ideal. Defined neither by language nor by ethnicity, the Hapsburg ideal of Austria conflicted with the narrower definitions of nationality being defined along those lines.

Really a pre-modern notion, this Austrian idea found appeal for many German-speaking Catholics and Jews of the upper middle class. Among them, Adolf Loos responded to the question of national identity in design by engaging the trans-national nature of Austria. As a German-speaking Austrian of Moravian origins, Loos resisted the vulgar forms of German nationalism, then quite widespread in Vienna and elsewhere. He was unwilling to define Austrianness, as some others would, along narrow lines of language, ethnicity, and religion. It appeared to Loos, moreover, that the founding of design upon national innocence and the primitive values of a peasant culture was outlandish. Loos, like

some other cosmopolitan Austrians, looked to internationalism as a route of escape from the nationalities question. For him, architectural nationalism was a destructive force that could only hinder the introduction of Western culture, and the related progress of design in the crafts and architecture. Thus, in his last article before the First World War, "Heimatkunst" (1914), Loos adopted a critical view toward the new wave of nationalistic ideas that had sprung up since the 1890s.

Closely related to the much earlier English arts and crafts movement, the *Heimatstil* movement contained much that was valuable in relation to rooting design to local building materials, techniques and climactic traditions.¹²⁷ Yet, despite its inspiration from England and functional potential, the *Heimatstil* was also based upon a strong current of German nationalism. Loos dramatically posed that its displaced sense of populism was ludicrous and unauthorized in world cities like Vienna. Like the earlier styles, movements whose time had come and gone, Loos assessed that the attempt to build a style on nostalgic considerations was doomed to failure.

A firm believer in technological progress, Loos was well aware of the risk posed by the pre-industrial values of *Heimatkunst*. Unlike *Historismus* or *Jugendstil*, Loos tells us, the *Heimat* artist wants to eliminate all recent inventions from building, making our cities smaller and less complicated. This reversal of the evolution of cities envisioned a return to a golden age of medieval towns, and a restored felicity with nature. Such design, based on a fall from grace, contradicted Loos's innate belief in cultural universalism. That popular wisdom proper for small Alpine towns could be displaced to Vienna seemed a laughable notion to him. In the megalopolis the adoption of rural values would soon result in the primitivization of culture. It would be a disaster if artists used building details from the provinces in Vienna, designing like peasants - irregular windows, bays, towers, coarseness, cut-off walls, the old slate roof - to create a city of "*fünf stockwerke bauen*."¹²⁸ The grimness of this prospect caused Loos to judge that the concept of this project is absurd in

and of itself, and would have retarded the course of civilization: *"Ein wahres glück für die heimatkünstler, daß die menschen in der steinzeit noch nicht diese forderung aufstellen, weil wir dann keine heimische bauweise besäßen, und sie dadurch keine lebensbedingungen hätten."*¹²⁹

It is a basic principle of Loos's philosophy of architectural design that once changes, as a result of new inventions and imitations of superior building ideas in foreign lands, have been incorporated in a tradition, there is no going back: "the striving toward refinement, and from it, perfection, which has fulfilled mankind since the very beginning, has created the current condition of our culture."¹³⁰ He believed that Vienna possessed a building style, drawn from the models of Italian nobles in the 1700s and beyond.¹³¹ Consequently, we (Austrians) shouldn't imitate northern Germany or France: *"Wir haben so viel italienische luft über die alpen herübergeweht bekommnt, daß wir wie unsere väter in einem stile bauen sollten, der gegen die außenwelt abschließt."*¹³² To build in a city like a peasant is pure naivete; a building in Vienna must be one *"das nur in einer millionenstadt stehen kann."*¹³³

For Loos the production of the applied arts and architecture are products of differing national and international tendencies. Due to their small size and ability to be transported the applied arts (and clothing) are less constrained by local conditions than building. The tremendous influence of an international center of culture can liberate the design of these works from regressive local tendencies. It is thus no surprise to find Loos extolling that the applied arts find full accommodation to English design. With architecture it is another matter. Wary of allowing design in a city such as Vienna to be influenced by the pre-industrial arts and crafts tradition of either England or Germany, Loos still understood architecture as constrained by local conditions. Unlike the applied arts, new buildings are forced to stand alongside other structures of much older vintage.

Loos therefore considered it of utmost importance in public architecture to observe the complex elements of the urban landscape.

The controversy surrounding his so-called Haus am Michaelerplatz revealed to Loos, however, that the conservative taste of the Viennese public was uncompromising. Here, after all, Loos claimed polemically that he was designing a city building in harmony with the Kaiserlichen Burg, the Platz, and the general character of the city.¹³⁴ In the tone of "Zwei Aufsätze und eine Zuschrift über das Haus auf dem Michaelerplatz" (1910) we can detect that Loos felt he was wrongly being branded a criminal by the city of Vienna. Writing that he had attempted to fit the building in with traditional Viennese architecture, Loos described his use of real marble, and as little stucco as was common in the simple houses of the Viennese middle class. The major difference, he asserted, between him and his critics was in how they conceived traditional Viennese architecture.

To this degree, Loos echoed some of the mixed feelings that Alfred Lichtwark expressed in reference to foreign architecture, although Lichtwark was, rhetorically-speaking, a much stronger nationalist. Like Loos, Lichtwark admitted in 1895 that the English are far ahead of the Germans in every way. Later in 1899, writing that the Germans are an unpractical people, Lichtwark wondered how the English can retain and develop "*heimische Bauweise*."¹³⁵ Indeed, for Lichtwark too the English were magnificent models: "*die englischen Ideen über Hausbau und Einrichtung bei uns jetzt eine mächtigere Anziehungskraft ausüben als irgend welche Gedanken, die von deutschen Bauakademien oder Bauschulen ausgehen*."¹³⁶ Yet, whereas the Hamburg Museum Director presented English architecture as a worthy model, he warned that we must not copy English forms as we do antiquity. In dubbing a completely international forum for art and literature impossible,¹³⁷ Lichtwark felt what was most needed by the German people was a return to the roots of local artistic traditions.¹³⁸

If the Germans want an architecture, Lichtwark underscored, it must be a German architecture, dependent upon the local conditions of life. For instance, he criticized the fact that in middle class architecture of northern Germany the spirit is spiritless, drawn from academic rules instead of rich local sources such as the buildings of fishermen with their painterly appearance. Lichtwark saw in these simple houses worthy principles of architecture, which show that color is more important than ornamental form in middle class architecture: "*Ihr Wesen besteht in der Farbigkeit der Bauglieder, nicht in der Aufmalung von Ornamenten.*"¹³⁹ Likewise, we are directed to a starting point for new middle-class architectural principles in the old, traditional building ways of Hamburg,¹⁴⁰ and what is described as "*die sachliche Schönheit unserer alten ländlichen und bürgerlichen Baukunst.*"¹⁴¹

This connection of middle class architecture with the character of the national landscape and the old *heimatlichen Kunstübung* had been raised earlier by Karl Henrici. In "Die bürgerliche Baukunst" (1892) he lamented, much like Lichtwark and Loos, that a middle class architecture has ceased to exist, a consequence of the loss of contact with nature and local traditions. The recovery of this tradition, likewise, can only be brought about by designing in tune with the trait of a people, the local conditions as well as the idiosyncrasies in the living patterns of the population.¹⁴² In a later essay by Henrici on Otto Wagner's book Moderne Architektur, he criticized Wagner's insufficient attentiveness to the *genius loci*, and, at the same time stressed the need for an "*Anknüpfung an das Erbe der Väter.*"¹⁴³ Today, we are told, the epitome is devotion to the fatherland. Art, consequently, should spring from the soul of a nation. What is more, Henrici is encouraged that the current movement of the arts in Germany is proceeding not from academic concerns, but from the Romantic or painterly spirit.¹⁴⁴

Towards the turn of the century, writers on architecture were faced with an impasse concerning the concepts of national and international. On the one hand, local

styles derived from rural values were not suited to urban life. On the other hand, international building styles, more suited to the cosmopolitan city, seemed distanced from special building traditions. As a consequence, new sources were investigated. One such source for a local building style attuned to urban concerns was the *Biedermeier* period of the 1820s through 1840s. The attractiveness of the *Biedermeier* to A. Schestag lay in his belief that there neither aesthetic nor artistic principles come into play; only practical needs. Schestag's "Zur Entstehung des Biedermeierstiles" (1903), emphasized the style's unique relationship to the needs of modern man. We are told,

dass der Bewohner mit seinem Sitten und Gewohnheiten, seiner Beschäftigung und seinen Liebhabereien den Ausgangspunkt bildet, von dem ausgehend sowohl die Behausung, als auch jedes Stück der Innenrichtung seinem bestimmten Zwecke gemäss seine notwendige Form erhält.¹⁴⁶

A related attempt to reconcile modernism with local traditions of another sort is demonstrated in Joseph August Lux's book, Die Moderne Wohnung und ihre Ausstattung (1905). Simultaneously convinced that the Baroque and its revivals which had dominated Austrian architecture in the late decades of the nineteenth century offers a poverty of inventiveness and impractical forms, Lux also sought a Viennese *Genius loci* in the *Biedermeier* era. The *Biedermeier* offered a source of local and regional artistic elements that have not been sullied by the events of the past 50 years. As Lux put it, it was a "*vollkommen durchgebildeten bodenständigen Kultur, die in ungebrochener Linie von den gewöhnlichen Tageserscheinungen bis zu den Gipfelpunkten, welche die Namen Grillparzer, Schubert, Schwind bezeichnen, emporsteigt.*"¹⁴⁶ So *Biedermeier*, once a word of ridicule, became for Lux, as well as for Loos, a title of honor. It is a rich source, a model for a household culture.

The specification of a national or international model for architecture is not a clear-cut matter. The discourses which place design into a network of these concepts develop in relation to every aspect of a generalized organization of architectural culture. The more

one investigates the differences which constitute any particular concept, the less easy it is to retain the relevance of that concept as granting ultimate significance to particular texts. Narrow definitions of concepts like nationalism or internationalism cannot fully characterize Loos. Loos's belief in himself as a traditionalist fits with his idea of Western culture. He was encouraged by the comment of a critical reviewer who supposedly said: "*das will ein moderner architekt sein und baut ein haus wie die alten wiener häuser.*"¹⁴⁷ The Michaelerplatz project was a challenge amidst contradiction. How does one design a modern apartment-retail building in the Viennese manner? For Loos, nostalgic of a unified past, this manner must harken back to the days before the stylistic chaos, to the simpler buildings of eighteenth century Vienna. It must also incorporate all features necessary to the functioning of a modern mixed-use building. Loos credited his modern building as breathing the unconscious spirit of old Viennese times:

Was zur dekoration nötig ist, soll ehrlich mit der hand aufgetragen werden, so wie es unsere alten barockmeister gehalten haben in jenem glücklichen zeiten, als es noch kein baugesetz gab, weil jeder das gesetz in seinem herzen trug."¹⁴⁸

For Loos, each city has its own *baucharakter*, and what can be beautiful in one can be ugly in another.¹⁴⁹ He scolded other architects for not taking into consideration the real character of the city, and instead creating on the Ringstrasse a characterless *melange* of styles, which he termed an architectural catastrophe.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, what we are getting in the center of Vienna, Loos tells us in the essay "Heimatkunst," are houses straight out of Magdeburg or Essen, all looking like the Kaufhaus Wertheim. While that building may work well in a city of long straight streets like Berlin, Loos writes, it suffers in Vienna's old city of short streets which require for the eye a horizontal division.¹⁵¹

Loos viewed culture and design as a detailed operations capable of improvement and demanding of careful observation. In contrasting Austria with England, he meant to prove that the superior moral purpose and technical utility of the English crafts should instruct Austrians. At no point did Loos intend for the Austrians to become either English

or some international species, or for Vienna to look like London. As his articles make clear, his estimation of the Austrian cultural and urban environment was much too important. To this extent, the encouragement that Loos gave to studying England can be read as the basis for a brand of enlightened national design as much as it can be construed evidence of pan-European cosmopolitanism.

Equally, Loos's internationalism can also be read as a means of escape from the bourgeois culture of Austria. His scheme of cultural hierarchy, whose points of apogee fall in antiquity and the Anglo-American world, represents a distrust of the provincialism and capitalist fragmentation he so detested in contemporary Vienna. By choosing international models for his designs, Loos's advocacy of radical national reform gained strength. The importance of the international was such that its destinations illustrated the force of modernity conceived independent of cultural disorder. Unlike national models, inseparable from the moral deficiency of society, international designs could be regarded in abstraction. The international, conceived in pure isolated forms at a distance, established for him and other writers a series of potent design images.

As Loos's position within the debates over nationalism and internationalism demonstrates, the dichotomy drawn between these concepts was less a pre-existing reality of European culture than it was a cognitive tool for analyzing culture. In actuality, all architects worked within a local building environment which was strongly influenced by developments outside of it. To varying degrees, the national and international co-exist in most design environments. It is only in texts that the purity of the universal or the local prevails. But, the reasons for this discursive occurrence are plain to see. Surely, the strident notes of either pure national virtue or surging international progress constitute altogether greater notions of a much desired organic unity than would a more measured assessment.

As mentioned earlier, this conceptual opposition of internationalism and nationality, like others discussed in this dissertation, was a response to the progress of urbanization, and the encroachment of urban architecture on the domain of building. International, or western culture, as understood since the Renaissance, referred most to a preference among the upper classes for classical antiquity. In the nineteenth century, the social reach of such international culture grew, as the teaching of the classics (and science) was institutionalized among the middle classes. As part of these universalist intentions were numerous attempts to understand architecture upon different (and not necessarily narrower) characteristics. One of these, owing to the great growth in national sentiment, was the conception of national design.

The debates on nationalism in the late nineteenth century continued the quest for architectural identity on linguistic, ethnic, and often religious affiliation. But, in this new instance, the hitherto dominant representation of architecture was challenged by specific symbols of rural building traditions. Based on this contestation, the textual struggle over nationalism throws into sharp relief the power struggle between the old urban elites, long accustomed to an international outlook, and the middle class representatives of the transformed urban artisanal class and rural peasantry. Yet, like other realities longed for by architectural culture, the national identity sought by many German and Austrian writers did not correspond in any way to the local, folk ways of the Middle Ages or pre-industrial era, unconscious of either foreign or national customs. National identification with the Middle Ages was a modern incarnation, increasing in proportion with the demise of pre-industrial traditions.

Both the international and national outlooks of the nineteenth century must be seen therefore as the ideological aftermath of Renaissance and Enlightenment notions of humanity. As the fragmentation of the industrial age unravelled this ontological unity, architectural writers struggled to preserve its reason. The adoption of contemporary

England or sixteenth century Germany as cultural models for architecture were coincident responses to a comparable ideological imperative. In all cases, whether or not they took the form of national or international identification, architects were anxious to take refuge in expansive, and at least discursively complete cultural parameters. This debate over nationalism has continued to the present day. Temporarily obscured by hegemonic ideologies of socialism in the political realm and the modern movement in the architectural realm, contestation for power through ethnic identification continues to be one of the great proofs of the demise of the Enlightenment image of a universal humanity.

Notes

1. For Austrians and Germans, the idea of a national architecture took on many different names, including: Germanic, medieval, Christian, northern, and transalpine. In addition, oftentimes the expression of anti-international interests had little to do with overall German nationality and were actually expressions of a more regional or local nature.

2. See Georg Iggers, The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present (Middletown, Ct.: Wesleyan, 1968).

3. T.S. Eliot's personal mixture of classical learning and Catholicism is testimony to this fact.

4. Cornelius Gurlitt, "Ziele der Architektur im neuen Jahrhundert," in Die Architektur des XX. Jahrhunderts: Zeitschrift für moderne Baukunst, p. 13.

5. This interpretation, of course, ignores the return to naturalism represented by French Impressionist painting after the 1860s. All in all, there is scant mention in German criticism in the applied arts and architecture of this seminal French art movement. See E. Zimmermann, "Gottfried Semper und die Moderne Richtung," Kgbl Neue Folge 15.1904, especially pp. 126-126.

6. According to Loos's biographer, Bernhard Rukschcio, Loos's visit to the United States was decisive in his theoretical development. Accordingly, Loos returned to Europe with the substantial foundations of his mature architectural theory. "Loos mußte in der harten Schule Amerikas alle bürgerlichen Vorurteile ablegen und die Fähigkeit erwerben, völlig frei zu leben, um zu überleben." Rukschcio & Schachel, p. 30.

7. "Das Andere, Ein Blatt zur Einführung abendländischer Kultur in Oesterreich" 1904, in Konfrontationen, p. 15. On Loos in the United States see Eduard Sekler, "Adolf Loos, Josef Hoffmann und die Vereinigten Staaten" in Adolf Loos (Wien: Graphische Sammlung Albertina, 1989), pp. 251-267; and Johannes Spalt, "Adolf Loos and the Anglo-Saxons" in Safran, Yehuda & Wang, Winfried, eds. The Architecture of Adolf Loos (London: Arts Council, 1985), pp. 14-19.

8. PS, p. 96.

9. On the North American source of influence, see Rainer Hans Tolzmann, "Objective Architecture, American Influences in the Development of Modern German Architecture," (Ann Arbor: Doctoral dissertation at the University of Michigan, 1975).

10. ILG, p. 30.

11. ILG, p. 31.

12. PS, p. 63.

13. PS, p. 38.

14. For a history of exhibitions see John Allwood, The Great Exhibitions (London: Studio Vista, 1977); and Paul Greenhalgh, Ephemeral Vistas: the expositions universelles, great exhibitions, and world's fairs (Manchester, UK: Manchester University, 1988). On the architecture of the

different fairs see Wolfgang Friebe, Architektur der Weltausstellungen, 1851 bis 1970 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1983).

15. At least ten world exhibitions were held in the subsequent three decades: London 1851, Paris 1855, London 1862, Paris 1867, Vienna 1873, Munich 1876, Philadelphia 1876, Paris 1878, Paris 1889, Chicago 1893.

16. Eitelberger, II, p. 82.

17. In addition, exhibition design fulfilled two different purposes. First, it led to the creation of an ideal architectural world. Second, occasioned exploring the possibilities of functional design and the constructive spirit. Fritz Schumacher, "Die Geschmacksentwicklung auf der Pariser Weltausstellung," (1900) Streifzüge... p. 167.

18. Jacob von Falke, Geschichte des modernen Geschmacks (Leipzig: T.D. Weigel, 1866), p. 380.

19. G. Portig, Die nationale Bedeutung des Kunstgewerbes (Berlin: Carl Habel, 1883), p. 25.

20. Building production was soon influenced by the exhibition, and a glass palace similar to the one in London was constructed in München in 1854.

21. Ahrens, "Die Reform des Kunstgewerbes..." p. 25.

22. See Wilhelm Bode, "Kuenstler im Kunsthandwerk," Pan 3.1897, p. 41.

23. Jacob von Falke had a mixed impression of the Viennese works at the 1867 Paris Exhibition, writing: "Man sah ein neues Element sich ragen, man sah eine frische aufsteigende Bewegung, aber auch zugleich, dass diese weitere Kreise noch nicht ergriffen hatte." "Das Kunstgewerbe," p. 266.

24. Friedrich Pecht, Kunst und Kunstindustrie auf der Weltausstellung von 1867 (Leipzig: F.A., 1867), p. 314.

25. Pecht also bemoaned the sad state of architecture, noting that it had lost its ages old role as the orchestrator of the arts. We are told that the decomposition of traditional society has left architecture an emancipated, but directionless art: "Mit der Emancipation des Ornamente von der Architektur verlor aber nicht nun allmählich das Stilgefühl, sondern es kam auch der Industrie abhanden." *Ibid.*, p. 182.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 191.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 316.

28. Friedrich Pecht, Kunst und Kunstindustrie auf der Weltausstellung von 1878 (Stuttgart: J.G. Cotta'schen, 1878), p. 153.

29. On the Vienna Exhibition of 1873, Eitelberger observes: "dass insbesondere die Tischlerei, die Möbelfabrication in Deutschland sich mit einem sehr geringen geistigen Apparate begnügt, die Vorbilder der früheren Jahrhunderte sehr wenig benützt und den Boden der Traditionen verlassen hat, während französische und italienische, theilweise auch englische Möbel mit Glück und Erfolg die Vorbilder und die guten Muster

ausnützen, die in der französischen und italienischen Möbelfabrication früherer Jahrhunderte vorliegen." Volume II, p. 280.

30. There, Lessing wrote: "Die guten auswärtigen Muster werden in schlechtem Material und schlechten Technik wiedergegeben, gut Erfindungen heimischer Künstler verstümmelt, um möglichst bequem massen heit hergestellt werden zu können." Das Kunstgewerbe auf der Wiener Weltausstellung 1873, p. 231.

31. Ibid., p. 5.

32. Ibid., p. 25.

33. Ibid., p. 19.

34. For one of the earliest appraisals in Germany of nineteenth century English achievements in the practical arts see Hermann Schwabe, Die Forderung der Kunst-Industrie in England (Berlin: 1866).

35. Springer, p. 262.

36. Eitelberger, II, p. 293.

37. Waentig, pp. 162-164. Waentig also quoted a critic, A. Rosenberg, who wrote "mit einem Wort: die bisherige Alleinherrschaft der französischen Industrie ist gebrochen." p. 165.

38. Ibid., p. 141.

39. Robert Dohme followed the Gothic Revival of Pugin and Ballie Scott, and showed great interest also in the Queen Anne Revival, looking at the houses of Richard Norman Shaw. Stephen Muthesius. Das Englische Haus: Eine Kultur- und baugeschichtliche Skizze (Braunschweig: George Westermann, 1888), p. 101.

40. Ibid., p. 4.

41. Ibid., p. 27.

42. Ibid., p. 25.

43. Ibid., p. 26.

44. Ibid., p. 42.

45. Ibid., p. 28.

46. Ibid., p. 30.

47. Peter Jessen, "Das englische Kunstgewerbe," DBZ 29.1895, p. 289.

48. Peter Jessen, "Der Kunstgewerbliche Geschmack in England, Die Möbel," Kgbl Neue Folge 4.1893, p. 65.

49. Peter Jessen, "Der Kunstgewerbliche Geschmack in England, Das Flachmuster," Kgbl Neue Folge 4.1893, p. 4.
50. Peter Jessen, "Der Kunstgewerbliche Geschmack in England, Die Moderne Reform; die Wohnung" Kgbl Neue Folge 3.1892, p. 95.
51. Jessen, "Das englische Kunstgewerbe," p. 287.
52. Jessen, "Der Kunstgewerbliche Geschmack in England, Die Möbel," p. 77.
53. Jessen, "Der Kunstgewerbliche Geschmack in England, Die Moderne Reform; die Wohnung," p. 95.
54. Jessen, "Das englische Kunstgewerbe," p. 287.
55. Jessen, "Der Kunstgewerbliche Geschmack in England, Die Moderne Reform; die Wohnung," p. 95.
56. Eberhard von Bodenhausen, "Englische Kunst im Hause," Pan 2.1896, p. 329.
57. Hermann Muthesius, The English House, trans. by Janet Seligman, (N.Y.: Rizzoli, 1979), p. 9.: from Das Englische Haus (Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1904).
58. Hermann Muthesius, "Kunstgewerbe," Die Krisis im Kunstgewerbe: Studien über die Wege und Ziele der modernen Richtung. ed. Richard Graul (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1901), p. 4.
59. Ibid., p. 13.
60. Ibid., p. 16.
61. Waentig, p. 192.
62. Ibid., p. 199.
63. Richard Graul, "Deutschland," Die Krisis im Kunstgewerbe: Studien über die Wege und Ziele der modernen Richtung, p. 4.
64. Richard Streiter, "Das deutsche Kunstgewerbe und die englisch-amerikanische Bewegung" in Ausgewählte Schriften..., p. 10.
65. Ibid., p. 18.
66. Ibid., p. 17.
67. Ibid., p. 11.
68. Ibid., p. 16.
69. Fritz Minkus, "Oesterrich" in Die Krisis im Kunstgewerbe... p. 54.
70. ILG, p. 47.

71.ILG, p. 50.

72.PS, pp. 29-32.

73.Hermann Bahr described Scala as linked to the Sächlich movement in design, those who emphasize simple, logically-conceived plans carried out by exceptionless foundational principles: "die den absolut vollkommenen Sessel oder Tisch oder Kasten sucht, kommt aus England und Belgien her, ihr Hauptmann ist Van de Velde, dem eine Beherrschung der ganzen Welt durch ideale Typen vorzuschweben scheint." Secession (Wien, 1900), p. 167.

74.Minkus, "Oesterrich," p. 55.

75.PS, p. 75.

76.ILG, p. 101.

77.ILG, p. 102.

78.ILG, p. 64.

79.ILG, p. 156.

80.ILG, p. 45.

81.Franz Drobny, Von Alten und Neuen Stil im Kunstgewerbe; Ergebnisse der pariser Weltausstellung 1900 (Salzburg: Salzburger Handels- und Gewerbekammer, 1901), p. 19.

82.Julius Lessing, Das Kunstgewerbe..., p. 11.

83.Lessing, Das Moderne in der Kunst, p. 28.

84.Lessing, "Neue Wege", p. 5.

85.Streiter, p. 28.

86.Ibid., p. 25.

87.Ibid., p. 87.

88.Ibid., p. 88.

89.ILG, p. 48.

90.ILG, p. 84.

91.ILG, p. 91.

92.ILG, p. 87. Scala may have directly influenced Loos's attitude toward new creation and imitation. Like other Anglophiles, Scala encouraged imitation of English models, realizing that their introduction into the productive and consumptive circles of Austrian society could signal a revitalization of local industry. Loos was well aware of Scala's strict vision: either copy exactly or create something new. ILG, p. 44.

- 93.PS, pp. 30, 35.
- 94.PS, p. 32.
- 95.PS, p. 34.
- 96.PS, p. 88.
- 97.Jessen, "Der Kunstgewerbliche Geschmack in England, Die Möbel," p. 83.
- 98.Karl Scheffler, "Ein Weg zum Stil," Berliner Architekturwelt 5.1903, p. 293.
- 99.Karl Scheffler, Moderne Baukunst (Berlin: Julius Bard, 1907), p. 40.
- 100.Scheffler, "Ein Weg zum Stil," p. 295.
- 101.August Wilhelm Schlegel, Die Kunstlehre (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1963), pp. 68 & 70.
- 102.According to Nicholas Pevsner, Goethe's seminal text "remained the point of departure of the Romantics in their admiration of Gothic buildings" and led to a series of related writings: Georg Forster, Ansichten vom Niederrhein (1791-94); Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, Herzenseriessungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders ((1797); Ludwig Tieck, Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen (1798); and Ernst Moritz Arndt, Reisen durch einem Thal Deutschlands, Ungarn, Italiens, und Frankreich in den Jahren 1798 und 1799 (1809). Some Architectural Writers of the Nineteenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), p. 11.
- 103.Hubrich, p. 12.
- 104.Ibid., p. 11.
- 105.Julius Langbehn, Rembrandt als Erzieher (Weimar: Alexander Duncker, 1922), p. 3.
- 106.Ibid., p. 13.
- 107.See Fritz Stern, The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology (Berkeley: California, 1961).
- 108.Hevesi, Österreichische Kunst im neunzehnten Jahrhundert, p. 10.
- 109.Albrecht Kurzwelly, "Lage und Zukunft der Volkskunst," p. 88.
- 110.Karl Henrici, "Volkskunst," (1896, Deutsche Welt) in Abhandlungen..., p. 102.
- 111.Robert Mielke, Volkskunst (Magdeburg: Walther Niemann, 1896), p. 18.
- 112.Ibid., p. 13.
- 113.Ibid., p. 14.
- 114.Ibid., p. 21.
- 115.Ibid., p. 59.

116. On this intellectual movement, see the writings of Paul Schulze Maumberg, especially Kulturarbeiten, Five Volumes (München, 1902-04).

117. Robert Neumann, Architektonische Betrachtungen eines deutschen Baumeisters mit besonderer Beziehung auf deutsches Wesen in deutscher Baukunst (Berlin: Wilhelm Ernst, 1896), p. 260.

118. And, given the staunchly nationalistic character of his argument, Neumann even admits that architectural language is to some extent a world speech. As all art, the language of architecture is composed from admixtures of previous and heterogeneous forms. It is, however, clear to the author that the artistic aims of architecture lead to national differentiation.

119. Neumann, p. 4.

120. Ibid., p. 6.

121. Ibid., p. 317.

122. Ibid., p. 265.

123. Ibid., pp. 265-266. On this last note he adds, "Die Sucht nach Anerkennung, die Ruhmredigkeit und das Schwelgen im Gefühle der eigenen Größe, wodurch andere Völker mit Stolzem Selbstgeföhle erfüllt werden, ist dem Deutschen fast gänzlich fremd." Ibid., p. 291.

124. Ibid., p. 271.

125. Ibid., p. 280.

126. Ibid., p. 287.

127. A forum for the Austrian movement was the journal Hohe Warte (1904-1908).

128. T, p. 127.

129. T, p. 122.

130. T, p. 123.

131. T, p. 124.

132. T, p. 129.

133. T, p. 124.

134. T, p. 115.

135. Alfred Lichtwark, "Bürgerliche Baukunst," in Palastfenster und Flügelthür, p. 20.

136. Alfred Lichtwark, "Realistische Architektur" in Palastfenster und Flügelthür, p. 66.

137. Partly out of the conviction that neither our building speculators nor other customers will see anything else in the new English fashion than its ornamental exterior. Lichtwark, "Realistische Architektur," p. 67.

138. Alfred Lichtwark, "Zur Einfuehrung," PAN 1.1895/96, p. 174.

139. Lichtwark, "Bürgerliche Baukunst," p. 32.

140. Lichtwark, "Realistische Architektur," p. 68. Accordingly, these principles can be garnered from painters' descriptions of the city; and close observation of the city's unique artistic means of expression.

141. Ibid., p. 70.

142. Karl Henrici, "Die bürgerliche Baukunst," p. 91.

143. Karl Henrici, "Moderne Architektur," p. 115.

144. Ibid., p. 123.

145. A. Schestag, "Zur Entstehung des Biedermeierstiles," K & KH 6.1903, p. 263.

146. Joseph August Lux, Die Moderne Wohnung und ihre Ausstattung (Wien: Wiener, 1905), p. 1.

147. T, p. 111.

148. T, p. 114.

149. Wien is, for example a Kalkputzstadt, while Danzig is one of Ziegelrohbau. T, p. 111.

150. T, p. 112.

151. T, p. 124.

CHAPTER 5

THE REAL AND IDEAL FUNCTION OF MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION

A pivotal quality of the nineteenth century disintegration of the classical tradition in architecture was a reconceptualization of function. Prior to this time, higher ideals dominated the notion of a building's function. Now in this century of industrialization, practical considerations including the use of new materials such as iron assumed a prominent role. True, the nineteenth century architectural discourse on function in the German-speaking world was by no means the first to take up questions of use and need. It was the first, however, to approach these questions within a textual frame no longer solely dominated by ideals of artistic perfection. During this time, function became understood through analysis of the practical conditions and limitations of building production as much as by the ideal aspirations for greater meaning and beauty.

Before the nineteenth century the situation had been quite different. Although architectural literature in Europe had provided four centuries of commentary on how purposive questions are always part of an artistic approach to design, speculation on appearance dominated discourse. During the Italian Renaissance, classical theories justified architecture on the basis of analogies with a perfect image of beauty attained only during antiquity. Later, as Europeans gained confidence in their own creations, theories of architectural beauty became more complex, logically, metaphysically and epistemologically. These theories shared a belief that the understanding of architectural function must be determined through analytic reference to an ideal essence.

The nineteenth century architectural mind did not hesitate to approach questions on architectural function from the vantage point of observable facts: notions of historical succession, and evaluation of the cultural and natural worlds. Thus, what distinguished this debate on function from earlier architectural theory was its escalating epistemological

independence. Whereas *a priori* conjectures prior to the industrial age had resorted to a formal systematization of the observable (and unobservable) worlds, the nineteenth century German language discourse on functionalism presumed experiential realism. Weakening of a philosophy of abstract entities allowed writers to study the formerly ignored facts of historical and contemporary existence.

As motivations to understand the real grew, principles were developed from experience, and architecture was increasingly understood through association with human life processes and their material embodiment in built form. It is evident from the theories of *Kunstgewerbe* discussed so far that this new paradigm served (as it had for quite some time in science) as the inferential determinant to a logic of progress. By converting the construction of buildings into an encoded exemplification of their users and society, realism in architecture anticipated one of the great myths of the modern movement, that is, the belief in the architect's ability to assess scientifically the spectrum of human needs in order to provide a complete blueprint for design.

A debate between ideologies of realism and idealism, of course, was not unique to architectural discourse. It was an integral part of the emergence of a divided consciousness in modern man. From the transformation of deliberation on the relations between the inner mind and observable world by Kant's demarcation and limitation of the *a priori* categories of sense perception, philosophers writing in the German language had discovered a great part of their ontology or epistemology through advancing schemes for the unification of the real and ideal.¹ If the early half of the century was colored by an idealist reaction to Kant's supposed empiricism, philosophy during the latter decades of the century was much influenced by the rise of scientific empiricism itself to renounce grand theorizing in favor of utilitarian knowledge. Fichte's collapsing of all reality into the pure consciousness of the subject's mind and Comte's radical positivism are examples of the dramatic range of these tendencies. At the mid-point of philosophizing on the real and

ideal stood the Hegelian dialectic. Nonetheless, by the end of the century it was the case that Hegel's attempt at unification of conceptual opposition through the workings of the dialectic had earned it as many enemies as adherents.

Naturally, in light of established notions of art as a spiritual and mental quality, most theories of art and beauty also initially took a more strongly idealist position. The ideas of *Geistesgeschichte* were particularly influential for aesthetic theorizing, as the objects of art became endowed with the imaginative powers of the mind. Thus, in the last quarter of the century the rise of empiricism and realist argumentation in the visual arts, and particularly architecture and the practical arts, met fierce opposition. In addition, hesitation characterized the statements of even architectural realism's most forceful proponents. It is no doubt because of this situation that dialogue between the real and ideal persisted in matters of the practical arts throughout the latter decades of the nineteenth century.

As architectural realism in the latter quarter of the century rejected the dominant means of abstract speculation, it did not fully reject the ends to which such speculation labored. Theories of the real persisted in stating that the final goal of architecture was a higher ideal. This problem of ultimate essence presupposed that an elevated plane of architectural expression was possible beyond the actual toils of everyday life. It is important, then, that realist theories, like their idealist counterparts, desired a state of architectural affairs other than the actual appearance of built form. Realism, while distinguished from idealism by its call for action in immanent practice, still demanded a coherence and order from architecture transcending that which is given.

In such circumstances it is easy to understand that even the fundamental theories of architectural realism before 1900 were reluctant to argue solely for the raw expression of structural materials and support systems or the asymmetrical plan of a building based on utilitarian needs. To take an example, the two realist theories whose arguments framed

much of the nineteenth century debate on constructive and material expression devoted a great deal of attention to the higher values of artistic symbolism. On the one hand, Gottfried Semper proposed covering constructive materials and support systems by a historically-derived cladding whose forms expressed lofty artistic thoughts. Karl Bötticher's idea of the artistic symbolism of structural members, on the other hand, while more cognizant of the visual need for structural and material expression, argued for higher artistic symbolism as well.

The absence of a monist philosophy centered on a given reality, the continued grasping by architectural writers for ideal truth, rendered impossible a unified expression of modern ideas on design. For architectural discourse, the lack of closure animated the *formkünstlerische Problem*, or the struggle for a synthesis between real conditions and ideal values.² More closely attuned to the world of real objects and practical needs of people than it had ever been before, discourse on architecture still would not cast off the encyclopedic intimations of history which had characterized the debate on the styles and its attendant striving for the higher truths of religious and philosophical ideas. This problem of unifying the body and soul of architecture persisted into the twentieth century. It led to heterogeneous discourse, where truth was sought in the cracks between the needs of the body and the speculations of the mind.

To be sure, the paradoxical relations between the real and ideal resulted in a great deal of theorizing on those conceptual boundaries which remained indistinct. Given these circumstances, Adolf Loos was far from alone in criticizing the multifarious tendencies of his age, and in doubting any claims for supposedly realist design. As G. Portig put it, "*unsere Zeit ist ja eine solche des Real-Idealismus.*"³ In 1896, Fritz Minkus wrote that in spite of its powerful struggles to discover itself, the first half of nineteenth century society had lost its inventiveness, and in its place "*die kritisierende, grübelnde, historisierende Kunsttheorie*" was substituted.⁴ While strongly urging the adoption of a technic-based

style in the manner of Otto Wagner, Minkus was aware that an authentic realist architecture had not yet emerged.

The development of realist understanding of architecture remained dependent upon a dualistic logic. Certainly, genuine materials and construction processes explained the descriptive functions of architecture, and theorists were quick to stress the technologies of building. Tectonics and materials could not, however, as understood by Semper, Bötticher and their followers, sufficiently support architecture's status as a cultural icon. For most of the century, new materials, especially iron, were deemed unable to carry architecture's greater artistic messages. When, toward the end of the century, contemporary materials and support systems were finally recognized as valid carriers of architectural meaning, these raw materials were themselves idealized. Iron and technological structures were invested with the artistic symbolism and ideal values that had formerly been accorded only to established architectural forms.

The Early Debate on Iron

Aside from the precepts of domestic use discussed earlier, no aspect in the drive toward realism in architecture was more controversial than the widespread application of iron technology to engineering and building construction. The metonymic mention of iron by Fritz Minkus was no slight of language. Within a specific theme, iron reflected the greater struggle in which the two worlds of idealism and realism were engaged century-long. It expressed more than any other material the growing ideological tendency to take aesthetic appreciation of the qualities of the constructive material itself, and not the decorative flourishes.⁶ Ever since the construction of the world's first iron bridge across the Severn river in England in the eighteenth century, it became straightforward that architecture was faced with a revolution in materials and technology as great as the first large-scale use of stone stereotomy by the Old Kingdom Egyptians at Saccara. Indeed, the

first half of the nineteenth century in England and France was marked by great advancements in iron technology (i.e., the development of wrought iron), culminating at mid-century in the standard use of iron supports for bridge construction and the great iron and glass horticulture and exhibition halls. The scientific development of iron went hand and hand with the growth of polytechnical schools.⁶

Alongside iron's technological development, philosophical propositions about its artistic contribution to ideal architectural appearance powered an intense debate.⁷ This debate describes in great detail the paradox between the real and ideal in architectural thinking during the second half of the century. The argument for the clear expression of iron members hinged on a belief that in the past architectural styles had always been based upon the most innovative constructive system of the time. In "Das Prinzip der hellenischen und germanischen Bauweise" (1846), Karl Bötticher recognized that we cannot go back to the pure Greek system of trabeation. Nor, he reasoned, can we continue a Germanic style which has been plagued by the traditional carrying-over of inappropriate Hellenistic art forms since the appearance of architecture in Rome. A new static system cannot be developed out of that old building material, stone. Rather, Bötticher felt iron and its static principles must be the foundation for the all-important roofing systems of the future.⁸ As iron offers absolute solidity, it represents the synthesis of the earlier static systems of trabeation and arcuation.

Bötticher's advocacy for iron was not widely shared in the following decades. Resistance coalesced around what was seen as the introduction of an alien and inappropriate element into the artistic conception of architecture. We hear this attitude already in the Petersburg architect L. Bohnstedt's "Über die Bedeutung des Eisens für die Baukunst" (1867), where the author recognized the utility iron offered to engineers, but renounced its aesthetic potential. Drawing upon the analogy between human bodies and buildings, Bohnstedt regarded hollow-bodied iron - its thin supports - as falling short of the

expression of full mass which the human body exhibits as an outgrowth of its skeleton.⁹ Despite its strength, and because of its lack of massiveness, iron lacked those qualities deemed essential for monumental expression in architecture. Stone, Bohnstedt countered, combined the mandated expressiveness and strength required for an exterior building material: *"Der Stein ist dasjenige Material, welches wir in gewaltigen Massen anzutreffen gewohnt sind, mit dem wir die Überzeugung von Mächtigkeit und Ausdehnung verbinden."*¹⁰

C. Schwatlo's essay on iron of 1870, "Eisen Konstruktion," was also rooted in the idealistic understanding of architecture as the expression of full massive, and seemingly heavy materials, and beauty as the complete harmony between *"einen edlen Sein und seiner äußeren Erscheinung, zwischen Gedanken und Form."*¹¹ Thus, despite his awareness that iron construction can accomplish all that earlier historical methods had accomplished, Schwatlo could not consider iron a logical artistic expression for architecture; and relegated its use to supports for the ceiling and roof.¹² A similar argument was presented by Richard Lucae, one-time director the Berlin Bauakademie. Lucae's "Über die ästhetische Ausbildung des Eisen-Konstruktionen" (1870) contended that iron is only narrowly corporeal, depriving architecture of a certain materiality.¹³ He was worried that iron's delicacy of appearance evokes a contradictory impression to that demanded of stability, and his article contained an excellent summation of the crisis of iron:

Konstruktion und Künstlerischen Gedanke stehen meist getrennt und unvermittelt neben einander und so lange dies der Fall ist, bleibt eine gedeihliche Entwicklung der Eisen-Konstruktionen in ästhetischen Sinne nach meine Ansicht eine Unmöglichkeit.¹⁴

For Lucae, the conception of architecture as having a relationship to ideals is not wedded to its relationship with materials. Architecture's expressive structure is incongruous, because what it wants to say is not reflective of what it is. Ideals, in other words, cannot be adequately expressed within the real materiality of iron construction.

Although discourse on iron continued to occupy prime ground in architectural theory of the second half of the nineteenth century, it was not the only theme through which the functionalist dialogue between idealism and realism was based. Over time, the sense of a varied scope of functionalist considerations integrated discussions of iron with other compulsions. Moreover, discontinuities among architectural writers in their attentiveness to iron were commonplace. Adolf Loos is an archetype of this latter trend. In his texts between 1897 and 1914, Loos showed little interest in the significance of new structural materials like iron. His avoidance of this debate is puzzling, especially given his admiration for Anglo-American building practices. How could Loos have gone to Chicago and seen the recent steel-frame skyscrapers and not formed a lasting impression?

Loos's elision of iron in his writings (or buildings for that matter) may have been the result of his strict adherence to a handwork-dominated narrative of modern architecture. As we observed earlier, his acceptance of the machine, and industrial production in general, was insubstantial. We are left with the thought that Loos always placed the concept of social order above that of technological competence. It was the project of Loos's architectural theory to find a way to reestablish the contours of traditional design; for him, social stability was that aspect of architecture most suited to bring about the end of the crisis of industrial change.

Although Loos refrained from discussion of the structural possibilities of iron (as well as the newly emerging reinforced concrete construction in France), he was concerned with traditional architectural materials, and particularly valuable types of stone and wood. In his facades for store entrances, polished stones and glass are used to suggest the recognition of retail wares and the particular level of pedestrian contact encountered at the ground story. This sensuous approach to design was coupled with a critical attitude toward the use of materials. Loos's textual treatment of building surfaces is quite respectful of their material honesty. What is more, his attitude on material expression was

also evocative of the debate on the visual expression of iron. By associating truth with the honest portrayal of materials, Loos implicitly adopted a stratagem of the debate on iron - criticism of the self-deception of false materiality.

Semperian Materialism

Discourse on materials is indicative of the nineteenth century's attitude in regards to the relationship of the individual to the external world, and in a greater sense, the formation of a connection between the ideal and real. To put the matter explicitly, the vacillating concept of material in architecture and the practical arts can be looked at as an indicator of the degree to which the writers felt the artistic subject could impact the unity of nature. Materials form a point of intersection between the boundaries of the human will and the objective stages of the real world. In an assessment of the power of materials to influence the course of design lies the starting point for an understanding of how architectural ideas take physical form.

For centuries, the intrinsic worth of materials had been a matter worth contesting. Already in the Middle Ages, the Abbot Suger of St. Denis recommended admiration of formal building features for their workmanship and not their material aesthetic. In "Die Baumaterialien" (1898), Loos projected this sense into a the debate on material honesty. Beginning with the idealist notion that materials are only the means to an end in art, he envisioned the artist as having a single goal in respect to materials: "*Das material in einer weise zu beherrschen, die seine arbeit von dem werte des rohmaterials unabhängig macht.*"¹⁶ Critical of the emphasis given by realist theories to the revelatory powers of raw materials, he wrote that we should have awe for human work, but not for the materials involved. The eternal truth of architecture lies elsewhere: "Fischer von Erlach did not need granite to make himself understood...He was capable of bestowing the nobility of art on the most plebeian dust."¹⁶

Loos's sense of the over-valuation of materials in his day is illustrated by his criticism of attempts to impersonate luxury through duplication of expensive materials by cheap substitutes. He castigated imitation of one material by another, and revealed a rather harsh assessment of the aesthetic powers which materials exert over men. A dramatic phenomenon of the late nineteenth century seemed to be the evaluation of an architectural work on the basis of its use of expensive and difficult to construct materials. Like Thorstein Veblen (whose ideas we will discuss in Chapter Seven), Loos was aware that most people judged works not on the basis of their creative ideas, but in regard to the material temperament, measured by the amount of hours of labor their erection required and money their materials cost. The grimness of this reversal of architectural judgement deeply troubled Loos, who recognized in it a deep moral crisis:

Die ehrfurcht vor der quantität der arbeit ist der fürchterlichste feind, den der gewerbekundige besitzt. Denn er hat die imitation zur folge. Die imitation hat aber einen grossen teil unseres gewerbes demoralisiert. Aller stolz und handwerksgeist ist aus ihm gewichen."¹⁷

Arguments against imitation and over-valuation of materials were not unique to Loos. The effects of imitating historical styles, and the related theme of simulating valuable materials with cheaper, factory substitutes were dominant themes in the *Kunstgewerbe* debate. Even a strongly historicist theorist, G. Portig, argued that in the practical arts all products should maximize the material aspects of an object. False simulation of physical attributes should be avoided.

Die Fläche muß als Fläche, der Marmor als Marmor...behandelt werden. Man darf nicht mit einem Scheinmaterial den Eindruck des Aechten erzielen wollen, sondern muß das Aechte in seiner ursprünglichen Frische erscheinen lassen, sowie man überhaupt dem belebenden Element der Farbe mit feinem Stilgefühl zum Rechte verhelfen soll.¹⁸

Likewise, in "Unser Styl" (1896), Fritz Minkus described the contradictions surrounding imitation of both natural materials and historic styles. Minkus held that it is much better to copy old foreign models than to produce something which possesses absolutely no beauty. Yet it was apparent to him that because we are unable to give, or create a new style for

our new materials (such as aluminum or linoleum), we copy the properties of other materials with them. Sarcastically, he admitted that our age does have a new style, the imitation style. Worse, we don't only imitate a material, but we take on all other attributes: "*ohne alle Nothwendigkeit, aus reiner Effecthascherei und zum Hohne aller ästhetischen Gebote eine Form durch eine ander imitieren...*"¹⁹

The wellsprings of the nineteenth century debate on materials are in Gottfried Semper's writings half a century earlier. In "Preliminary Remarks on Polychrome Architecture and Sculpture in Antiquity" (1834), Semper made an initial plea for material honesty which stressed recognition of the tangible properties of materials at the same time as cautioning against the over-valuation of these properties. Advocating that materials should not imitate each other, Semper wrote: "Let the material speak for itself, let it step forth undisguised in the shape and proportions found most suitable by experience and science. Brick should appear as brick, wood as wood, iron as iron, each according to its own statical laws."²⁰ Only paint is needed for protection against the effects of wind and rain.

Later, however, in Der Stil, Semper seemed to reverse himself, and developed a theory in which material transfiguration stands at the center of artistic activity. In this theory, Semper attempted to merge the real and ideal within rules of historical evolution. Essentially, the argument is made that architectural decoration, the ideal side, proceeds from basic needs, just as constructive systems, the real side, emerges from humanity's higher desires. Semper presumed that the decorative symbols of facades and other building surfaces originate in synthetic productive activity. Describing an organic movement within the productive crafts, he located the dominant mechanism of the ideal-real synthesis in the textile arts: "*Die Anfänge des Bauens mit den Anfängen der Textur zusammenfallen.*"²¹ As to this *Urkunst*, Semper wrote that the textile art is the dominant technical skill for the construction of walls. In primitive circumstances, wickerwork was

the original space divider, the essence of the wall. All Subsequent development of facade expression in architecture relates to textiles as later walls were built from adaptations of its practices:

alle anderen Künste, die Keramik nicht ausgenommen, ihre Typen und Symbolik aus der textilen Kunst entlehnten, während sie selbst in dieser Beziehung ganz selbständige erscheint und ihre Typen aus sich heraus bildet oder unmittelbar der Natur abborgt.²²

Stone or masonry are interpretations of textile technic, and are not essentially bound to the spatial concept. The use of these types of walls was for protection, defense, permanence, or as a foundation for the spatial enclosure:

das Prinzip der äusserlichen Ausschmückung und Bekleidung des structiven Gerüstes hinzuweisen, das bei improvisirten Festbauten nothwendig wird und die Natur der Sache stets und überall mit sich führt, um daran die Folgerung zu knüpfen dass dasselbe Prinzip der Verhüllung der structiven Theile, verbunden mit der monumentalen Behandlung der Zeltdecken und Teppiche welche zwischen den structiven Theilen des motivgebunden Gerüstes aufgespannt waren, auch ebenso natürlich erscheinen muss, wo es sich an frühen Denkmälern des Baukunst kund gibt.²³

Since the masonry or stone wall came later, it contained within its forms the memory of the textile wall. For a long time, copies such as the later masonry wall followed the textile prototype: "the artists who created the pointed and sculpted decorations on wood, stucco, fired clay, metal, or stone traditionally though not consciously imitated the colorful embroideries and trellis works of the age-old carpet walls."²⁴ Everywhere, Semper contended, the stone wall can be looked at as a painted carpet. Architectural decoration, far from a meaningless additive to structural system, is an integral amplification of that system's higher tectonic evolution through history. In spite of the considerable variation among ornamental schemes throughout history, Semper's integrative principle of development refused the notion that ideal and real drives in architecture emerge from separate realms.

Constantin Lipsius's understanding of the entwined relationship between beauty and constructive methods in architecture was indebted to Semper. For his part, Lipsius

was impressed by the power of engineering science in the nineteenth century, its purposive reaching toward a naked, unembittered reality, and abandonment of ideal striving. Yet, Semper's affect upon Lipsius led to the latter's unwillingness to give up architecture's striving for integrated design. Like Semper and his other predecessors in architectural theory up until this time, Lipsius refused to accept that forms derived from engineering necessity alone could satisfy our psychological interests in beauty. Whereas Lipsius was fascinated by the aesthetic pleasure to be derived from the simplicity and clarity of material and forms meeting an engineering difficulty, he felt a sense of duty to the notion of ideal truth in art:

Nicht die Darstellung der Konstruktion als solche ist die Aufgabe der baukunst, vielmehr die ästhetische Verkörperung des speziellen Baugedankens im ganzen und einzelnen. Mögen wir nun in jedem Einzelfalle die Konstruktion scharf hervorheben, oder sie verhüllen, oder sie modifizieren: all unser Bestreben kann und darf nur das eine Ziel haben, unser Werk auf Grund der Zweckmäßigkeit und der struktiven Möglichkeit und Richtigkeit zu bezeichnenden harmonischen, schönen Erscheinung durch zu bilden, es zu beleben, zu beseelen. Das Kunstwerk darf nicht gegen reale Wahrheit verstoßen. Die Wirklichkeit aber mit ihren Disharmonien, ihrer Rohheit und Nüchternheit, ihrer Sorge und ihrer Qual ist nicht die Lebenssphäre der Kunst.²⁵

The preservation of aesthetic aims in architecture, in other words, requires more than a *starres nützlichkeits Skelett*.²⁶ It demands reconciliation of the opposite notions of reality and ideality. Like Semper, Lipsius accepted that the ultimate criterion of an architectural work could not be that of material realism, but must stem from a sense of the true beauty created out of spiritual affairs. In this spirit, he wrote that the future for architecture lay "*aus dem dienenden Verhältnisse zu Bedürfniss, Staat und Kultur zu freier selbstzwecklicher Idealität emanzipire*."²⁷

The decision by Semper's followers to measure materials in both real and ideal terms led to a framework which viewed formal appearance as inseparable from primordial social and tectonic events and the trajectory of material development. There followed a strong tendency to put to use historical knowledge for the functional questions of the

present day. Foremost in Rudolf Redtenbacher's mind was how this such knowledge can help establish a material tectonic for architecture. As he wrote in his "Aphorismen über Baugeschichts-Schreibung" (1878): *"Die Erkenntnis des Bauwerkes als Kunstwerk setzt die Kenntniss der Lebensbedürfnisse voraus, dem es entsprungen, der Naturgesetze, dem es unierworfen, der Hilfsmittel, mittelst deren es verwicklicht worden ist."*²⁸ Greatly influenced by Semper, Redtenbacher wanted to examine traditions of material forces, the advancement of industry, agriculture, commerce, transportation and machinery. In short, he stressed examination of those material circumstances which constitute society and the higher pursuits of art.

As he had made clear earlier in "Ueber der Begriff der Baukunst" (1877), the essence of architecture lies in the power of principles and their purposive application. *"Die Kenntniss der Technik, der Mittel, deren sich der Künstler bedient, seine Ökonomie in der Vertheilung der Massen und der Ausschmückung des Einzelnen zu verstehen, ist eine wesentliche Vorbedingung zur Erkenntniss des Kunstwerkes überhaupt."*²⁹ Since he accepted that a material philosophy of architecture must be grounded in historical observation and not solely scientific study, Redtenbacher's system revived memories for forgotten technic, and like Semper's analogous investigation, legitimized the perseverance of diverse building methods. Its comparative historiography, which might find great fulfillment in our post-modern age, throws light on the dilemma architectural theorists have faced ever since they narrowly tried to base understanding on the advances of engineering and the sciences. Throughout Redtenbacher's texts one is struck by a sense for the tectonic liberation of necessary material powers for the ideal development of architectural form:

Die bildende Künste sind nicht möglich ohne den materiellen Wohlstand eines Volkes oder der Herrscher, und wo die äusseren Lebensbedingungen für ein Volk zu schwierige und verwickelte sind, erstickt auch jeder Auffassung der idealen Bestrebungen des Menschen im Keime."³⁰

Thus what Redtenbacher aimed at was the development of a general tectonic, based on a set of principles valid for buildings in all parts of the world, which would explain architecture's movement through the concrete to the absolute.

Although Loos was in agreement with aspects of the Semperian tectonic, this notion of an integrated movement of architecture through productive relations to higher ideals was an anathema to Loos. That textile-derived ornament could be the essence of the building wall was also an abhorrent thought to Loos. Opposed to any overt merger of artistic and material relations in architecture, Loos attacked Semper's theory of *Bekleidung* in his article "Das Prinzip der Bekleidung" (1898).

Concerned here with the negative consequences of adapting Semper's theory of textile-interpretation, Loos realized that although Semper admonished the imitation of materials, his more in-depth idea of facade evolution contained the theoretical seeds for widespread misinterpretation. In the ideological commotion of the late nineteenth century, Semper's theory of *Bekleidung*, developed in response to the 1830s debate on polychrome in architecture, took on irresolute associations. Specifically, Semper's idea that architectural design evolves through the necessary interpretation of certain materials by other materials was thoughtlessly enlarged to allow an outpouring of historically irrelevant, and unnecessary interpretations.

Further, by suggesting that material transmutation does not lie at the core of the genesis of a building, Loos promoted the germ of creation in the creation adaptation of form (and not material) by the architect to function and tradition. Ironically, he may have been partially influenced by writings of Adolf Hildebrand stressing the same role for the artistic impulse. In the German sculptor's work, Das Problem der Form (1893), he countered the materialism believed by many at the time to lie at the core of Semper's theory. Hildebrand was deeply concerned with changing aspects of human perception, and the effects of vision on the artistic act. He believed materials, while integral to the successful realization of a

work of art, are not themselves capable of strongly asserting an artistic statement. Materials are an element of an artistic act dependent on the cognitive faculties. For Hildebrand, the nature and constraints of a material are neither the key route to a beautiful work nor, however, are they to be utterly disregarded. The expedient use of materials must be taken into account so that it favors the artists design conception. "If not, the mechanical work will be striving in other directions than the pictorial conception, and the hindrance thus offered must be overcome, or else the natural conception of the artist will suffer and degenerate."³¹

Hildebrand's critique of materials was much more related to the creation of forms than the satisfaction of needs. He was interested in the creative will expressed in art objects, and described a formative activity unique to perceptions of the mind. In opposing Semper, Loos addressed practical problems in architecture, but also gave credence to some of Hildebrand's principles. Although critical of form-making as an end in itself, Loos was thus hardly alone in accepting that materials realize different forms. As he wrote in the spirit of Hildebrand, each material is suited for certain purposes and cannot be substituted:

Ein jeder material hat seine eigene formensprache, und kein material kann die formen einer anderen materials für sich in anspruch nehmen. Denn die formen haben sich aus der verwendbarkeit und herstellungsweise eines jeden materials gebildet, sie sind mit dem material und durch das material geworden."³²

In this reversal of Semper's theory of *Bekleidung*, which relied heavily on the transformative development of different materials for similar purposes, Loos was explicit in stating that materials are utterly coincident with formal and functional character; walls cannot be carpets. Carpets were always meant to "reveal clearly their own meaning as a cladding for the wall surface."³³

The stimulation for Loos's rejection of Semperian materialism is inseparable from his revulsion at the counterfeit character of *Ringstrasse* architecture. He deplored the common practice of nailing an expensive-looking facade to a simple structural frame. This

deception, as he saw it, tramples our senses and confuses any compassion we may have for the quality of materials. Given this state of events, Loos was blind to the possibilities of material transmutation. He argued for the honest portrayal of all materials such that: "a confusion of the material clad with its cladding is impossible. That means, for example, that wood may be painted any color except one- the color of wood."³⁴ These last words compare the malady of wood staining to the imitation of rough brickwork in stucco. Thus, "any and all materials used to cover walls - wallpaper, oilcloth, fabric, or tapestries - ought not to aspire to represent squares of brick or stone."³⁵

In grounding his theory of materials in their natural essence, Loos rejected the integrative associations of Semper's theory which allowed the masking of a building's functional forms in a symbolic material cladding. Here, more than elsewhere in his philosophy of design, Loos approached the empiricist paradigms of the physical sciences. That is, he rejected ideal associations for observable natural realities. Material reality lies in the sense observation of the actual object, not in its potentially alterable concept. Unlike his nostalgic adherence to the vanishing handcraft tradition in the face of iron and machine technology, Loos repeated again and again the existence of materials in pure observable terms.

In a number of ways, however, especially when his designs are taken into account, the thrust of Loos's theory of materials is diffused by contradictions. On the one hand, he criticized the over-valuation of material qualities as ideal essences. For Loos, the romantic emphasis on the associative qualities of materials with wealth, power and beauty resulted in the creation of a unauthentic zone of contemplation. On the other hand, because of his love of the striking natural qualities of fine textures (e.g., marble and hard wood), his interior designs established a hierarchy of material language in architecture, and elevated select material expression to an ideal plane. His use of luxurious materials, divorced from artistic representation, was in itself an attempt to ennoble the humbler aspects of

architecture. Although quite reluctant to consider technologically new materials, Loos was greatly enamored of raw forms. In addition, although he realized the sensuous qualities of pre-industrial materials, Loos was evidently influenced by the growing movement in the 1890s to recognize the coarse qualities of iron and other new technological materials. The biographer of Loos, Benedetto Gravagnuolo expresses this affirmation of Loos's unpredictability.

Clearly the rationality of Loos is only a derivative of the principle of realism. It is conceived primarily as a practical *tool*, a simple procedure for control of the project. There is nothing ascetic, still less dogmatic, about it. It is never raised to the level of a system. On the contrary, it is often gainsaid by transgression of the self-imposed rules. The most fascinating aspect of Loos's architecture lies in the simultaneous and contradictory presence of a thin irrational vein that is tightly bound by the rigid links of rational composition.³⁶

The Legacy of Bötticher

If we are to trace the development of Loos's response to theories of material realism, we must go back to the much earlier nineteenth century debate on the role of unprocessed representation of materials, and specifically to the ideas of Karl Bötticher. Given Bötticher's support for the visual aspects of iron technology, his idealization of material form operated in antithesis to Semper in the discourse on materialism in architectural writing leading to Loos.

Like Semper, Bötticher took a very positive view of the gradual development of engineering technologies in the industrial age. But, caught up the contemporary excitement surrounding iron construction, Bötticher argued that the development of new constructive materials propelled architecture to immediately express new artistic forms through the idealization of new structural possibilities. Unlike Semper, who was not concerned with expressing new structural developments, and condoned the wrapping of the structural frame by a decorative wall system, Bötticher required maximum visibility of the

structural/material frame. For him, the great task facing the architect is to emphasize the various structural nodes of a building artistically.

In Die Tektonik der Hellenen (1844), Bötticher saw his task as that of scientifically validating the combined structural and decorative systems of Greek architecture. His text was, so to speak, an empiricist corrective against the overtly *a priori* explanations of the classical vocabulary of forms. Close to the beginning of the book, he professed that Vitruvius, while the originator of architectural activities for subsequent millennia, was silent "*über die innere Einrichtung und Ausstattung des hellenischen Tempel, über Statik und Gliederung ihres Steinbaues.*"³⁷ This point is of decisive importance, given that Bötticher ventured to explain the complex hierarchy of classical decorative forms as the spiritual representations of internally consistent static relations.

Architecture first begins, wrote Bötticher, with covered spaces.³⁸ The entire spatial organization of a building is based upon a logical development from the ground plan (through structural construction) to the enclosed building. Undoubtedly, this ground plan, as the aftermath of decisions based on human needs, largely determines the horizontal form of interior spaces. Nonetheless, interior spaces are also substantively shaped through the process of construction itself. The specific vertical qualities of interior space, the features of its defining solids and voids, are the result of attempts to carry the load of the roof by support systems.

The importance of supporting a roof links up all individual building elements into a complete system of building members. Indeed, Bötticher was fond of looking at the system of building members through an analogy to biology, envisioning building construction as growth from an embryo to a mature organism. "*Die Natur hat sich überall der körperlichen Form als Organ bedient, um in dieser das Wesen und den Begriff eines jeden organischen Gebildes nach allen Beziehungen auszusprechen.*"³⁹ The biological analogy is used to show that all elements of a building must relate in complete harmony and balance. From

knowledge of the structural organization of the raw materials comes an understanding of all "*einzelnen Körperlichkeiten des Baues in der nothwendigen Form, Anordnung und Verbindung für ihrer raumbildende Eigenschaft und statische Leistung.*"⁴⁰

As the equivalent of the skeletal and muscular systems, the importance of the static system of constructive members cannot be underestimated. The balance accorded to the design through static qualities of resistant solidity and localized inertia creates the sense of balance in a building. The notion of static balance also links up the material system of construction with the building's artistic programme. To this end, Bötticher put forth his theory that an ornamental program and structural system must be mutually defining. Architecture works from both the real and ideal, that which is purely structural and that solely imagistic.

Building elements are likewise divided into categories of *Werkform* and *Kunstform*. The *Werkform* is a component element of the structural system. Inasmuch as technology is a scientific quest, the sphere of the *Werkform* is that of technological advancement and invention. Thus as building needs change, and new technological and material possibilities become available, the *Werkform* itself can be transformed. In some instances, where Bötticher addressed the debate on iron, old types of *Werkform* are abandoned and new types introduced. As he writes, the essence of the *Werkform* is to be found in constructive performance:

Denn während die Möglichkeit und das Dasein der Kunstformen, auf der Findung und Nachahmung vorhandener Erscheinungen beruht, liegt der Werkform kein daseinendes Vorbild zu Grunde: vielmehr ist diese, gleich dem ganzen statischen Gliedersysteme, durchaus nur ein Produkt, welches die Idee rein abstrakt aus der materiellen Leistung gefolgert hat die von der Körperlichkeit erfüllt werden soll...⁴¹

By contrast, the *Kunstform* is only an allegorical explanation. Unlike the *Werkform*, which can be created anew, the *Kunstform* is only possible as the enrichment of an already existing model. Reduced to its essential meaning, that of creating beauty, the *Kunstform* derives its range of reference from existing examples of architectural beauty.

For Bötticher, architectural beauty is the expression of static relations; and the resulting conditions of tension, weight, harmony, symmetry, directed movement, balance, and proportion.⁴² The *Kunstform* can thus be regarded as the etherialization of physical exploits. As the idealization of real processes, they are interchangeable among different materials. Since these exploits are possible in all materials, and building systems, the *Kunstform* is independent from the accidental type, properties and color of their *Werkstoff*.⁴³ As it is, the *Kunstform* preserves a memory of the development of these relations through history. Like Semper's building elements it is historicized, and a conservative force in architectural evolution. The awareness of this condition is probably the result of Bötticher's conviction that original static relations have been lost to us for a long time. The *Kunstform*, allegorically representing these extinct forms, preserves an ideal of beauty.

Das analoge Vorbild bleibt hier immer nur Mittel zu dem Zwecke das ideal Vorgestellte mit ihm zu versinnlichen, nicht ist die Bildung seiner selbst der Zweck. Dies bezeichnet den Unterschied der rein allegorisierenden Schilderung um der reinen Vorgangs oder Genrebilderei. Denn letztere bildet nicht mehr allegorisch vergleichend, indem sie nur Gegenstände und Erscheinungen entweder ihrer selbst willen nachahmt, oder sie benutzt um wirklich Ereignisse oder Vorgänge der Gegenwart oder Vergangenheit darzustellen.⁴⁴

Using a borrowed and recognizable decorative language, the *Kunstform* perpetuates architecture's intelligibility. Otherwise, the creation of new images of art alongside those of construction might lead to chaos.

Yet, Bötticher was adamant that the *Kunstform* is neither willful nor accidental, but dependent upon the qualities and conceptual relations of its *Werkform*.⁴⁵ There is nothing mysterious, moreover, in the unraveling of a building element's artistic symbolization. The *Kunstform*, in fact, forms the delicate extremity and visible body of the *Werkform*, what is described by Bötticher as the *bildliche Formensprache der Tektonik*. In this connection, a *Kunstform* is the qualitative attribute of each building member, the case in which each *Werkform* is clothed by a characteristic covering.⁴⁶

Bötticher's idealization of structural and functional necessity in Greek architecture proved a powerful means for understanding architecture's bipartite nature in the decades after its publication. The idea of a broad theoretical framework which connected architecture's artistic and structural realms was very appealing. In Hermann Lotze's Geschichte der Aesthetik in Deutschland (1868), the idealist philosopher described architecture as an art only insofar as it serve human purposes in life.⁴⁷ Lotze, who studied philosophy in Leipzig under G.T. Fechner and C.H. Weisse, was a Professor at Göttingen and Berlin. It was important for him that philosophical systems remain open to advances in the empirical sciences, and by association that artistic systems connect with modern technology.

Consequently, Lotze was generous in his praise for the material minimalization of the emerging industrial aesthetic of iron.⁴⁸ For him, architecture could not be understood through various different concepts of art, but only through the weight of its singular principles of the tying together of masses and their purposive application. We seek to understand how architecture ties: *"der schwere unorganische Stoff als Material, die consequente Verbindung seiner Einheit durch ein und dasselbe Princip des Zusammenhalts als Methode des Verfahrens, endlich die Herstellung in sich ruhender, für menschliche Kraft unverrückbarer Massenganzen als Aufgabe."*⁴⁹ Lotze found dry and unproductive Winckelmann's discussion of the column orders, and was critical of the continuation of this evaluation of *Kunstschätzung* in the nineteenth century by Schnaase and Kugler. In full agreement with Bötticher, he saw the decorative shell as compelled to make all structural relations evident to the eye.⁵⁰

Belief in a structural/artistic basis for functional creation was also claimed in Sigismund Wolff's "Beiträge zur Aesthetik der Baukunst" (1865). Wolff, like Bötticher, turned his attention to the artistic appearance of functional building members, which resulted in his theory of contrasting forms. Wolff was adamant that buildings are

independent forms which do not imitate the natural world. Their form derives from a semi-autonomous architectonic mission. As such, architecture is created according to the pure rules of technic, and not those laws of other realms of human thought. Partially banishing idealist sentimentality, he argued that all constructive parts be functional - and not merely decorative - or else lose their worth. The pivotal fact is the structural/material basis for architectural beauty: *"Die Hauptschönheit des Gebäudes ist also die Konstruktion...praktisch und begriffsmäßig hingestellten form."*⁶¹ Like Bötticher, he had reservations about autonomous decorative systems, and saw the center of artistic value in ornamental systems which are fully related to pure constructive elements. *"Diese Verzierungen kommen von innen, von Wesen der Glieder des Gebäudes heraus."*⁶²

Despite his constructive leanings, Wolff still believed in ideals. Hence, he extended his argument of functional beauty to an aesthetic theory of formal contrasts. Although buildings are not representative of nature, Wolff believed that their aesthetic value could be abstractly compared to that of nature. He proposed contrasts of forms to suggest a semi-independent perception of architectural beauty. Firstly, they include those contrasts of forms, colors, materials which answer the primary aesthetic interests of man. Every formal detail, in other words, either reinforces or plays off against another detail. Secondly, Wolff was convinced of the aesthetic potential of architecture's contrast with the natural environment: whereas nature is unsymmetrical, architecture is symmetrical. To establish a contrast between building and the colorful and morphologically varied plant world, therefore, he recommended that buildings should use clear, simple forms. This recommendation of architectural beauty on the basis of simple forms, so potent a theory for the twentieth century, arose here not out of the internal tectonic relations, but as a speculative response to the romantic theory of natural beauty.

Heinzerling's "Die Bildungsgesetze der Formen in der Architektur" (1868-69) developed Bötticher's theory in a different way. Studying mathematics, natural sciences

and architecture at Gießen, Heinzerling was an active architect throughout Hesse, eventually becoming Professor of *Bau- & Ingenieurwissenschaften* at the Universität Gießen. Taking the systemic division into *Werkform* and *Kunstform* as a starting point, he attempted to explain its inconsistencies by making the system more responsive to a broader range of architectural expression. We are told that *Werkform* and *Kunstform* do not take into account the full range of possibilities of creative activity in architecture. Heinzerling's criticisms therefore took the form of an expansion of the binary classificatory system proposed by Bötticher to a quaternary process. Furthermore, Heinzerling understood that a strict set of *Bildungsgesetzen* is the basis for the invention of both singular and composite forms in architecture.⁵³

In his attempt to account for what he perceived as the greater subtleties of the design process, Heinzerling spoke of disposition, construction, composition and artistic symbolism as the totality of architectural essence. As his principal example, he depicted the identity of the most famous architectural form, the column, as the culmination of this four-part chain of reasoning. In introducing the first stage, the *Nutzform*, Heinzerling explains that it arose from the necessity for a particular spatial arrangement, and consequent open system of supports. The second phase, the *Werkform*, concerns the critical production of as much stability and resistance as possible; and in the case of the column system what is important is a sufficient diameter of the circular cross-section. The *Begriffsform*, the third moment in this tetralogy, involves dissection of the programmatic and constructive member into conceptual parts, or the decomposition of the supports into their parts and their positions in regard to each other; the column's explication into base, shaft and capital as part of its function as a support for the entablature. The culmination of a design, the *Sinnform*, is the development - drawing upon representation of nature - of single symbolic elements for the parts of the *Begriffsform* into artistic forms.⁵⁴ Indeed,

the *Sinnform* completes the architectural *Kunstform* by sculpting out of the functional member symbols of an either geometric, vegetative or animalistic character.⁵⁵

In philosophizing the separate material realization of artistic, constructive, and other functional aims of architecture, Bötticher and his followers laid the groundwork for the consideration of materials from their own special standpoint. In this respect Bötticher's corrective of the doctrines concerning the relationship of historical form and contemporary function differed from the holistic traditionalism of the Semperian school, where materials were elements in historically dominant design frameworks. For Bötticher, materials, as the instruments of new cultural expressions, cause ruptures in architecture's artistic representational schemes. Loos's formulations regarding the sanctity of material expression can only be understood by reference to this dismemberment of materials from developmental history.

Although Loos's idea of materials was not based on an assimilation into structure, he nonetheless insisted that materials have their own intrinsic and incontestable reality. Altogether, if Bötticher understood static relations as the determinant for the embodiment of form, Loos found this cause in social relations. Social reality, like technological reality, changes over time in response to important inventions and transitions. One does not, for either Loos or Bötticher, introduce change for the sake of change. When change occurs, materials are replaced only inasmuch as they do not correspond to new expressive needs. Since for Loos materials correspond to social values as well as economic functional realities, when change necessitates a new material, replacement, and not imitation, is the only alternative. And in a building where certain traditions are still operable, there is no more need to substitute materials than there is to abandon the old ways of designing in the handicrafts.

Architectural Realism

As the discourse inspired by Bötticher and Semper illustrates, from the 1840s to the 1880s, architectural functionalism was conceived from the vantage point of both real tectonics and ideal decoration. Semper's followers were inspired to derive an integrated tectonic which visually submerged constructive aspects of architectural form-making in a decorative shell. Bötticher's followers, reluctant to let go of the vision of structure, were nonetheless equally attentive to the explicit bonds between real and ideal creation. In either case the goal was the same, even if the means were different: the immanence of higher truth within constructive relations. As such, the incoherent, yet incompatible pursuits, of the real and ideal were revealed as the foundations for the nineteenth century German-language discourse on architectural functionalism.

It is doubtless that as time wore on more writers on architecture became aware of the extent of historicist intervention in what otherwise were purely practical affairs. As we saw in Chapters Two and Three, historicism became gradually discredited by the early 1890s, as an impetus to discover new principles for architecture accelerated. During this time numerous proposals were made finally to establish a realistic logic of architectural creation in conformity with scientific principles. Yet, whereas the new proposals would eventually contrast with the decidedly historicist theories of Semper and Bötticher, sympathy for transcendent values lost little of its former appeal. Given a gradual shift from historical codes to scientific processes, images of the ideal emerged in new descriptive realms.

The texts of the Swiss architect Hans Auer demonstrate the initial phase of this discursive transformation. Here we are presented with a new union between historical forms and empirical principles of design. Auer's "Die Entwicklung des Raumes in der Baukunst" (1883) is one of the earliest theories to transplant the dialectics of the real and ideal onto a new perspectival plane. Undoubtedly influenced by Bötticher's study of spatial

roofing systems, Auer espoused architectural nature as the creation of enclosed spaces. Space was doubly important because it emerges from considerations of both practical needs and higher considerations of beauty. Auer's insight distinguished spatial expressions linked to socio-economic conditions from those which transcend them and express monumental needs. For Auer, the purely economic motives for the creation of space are the beginning of design. They are, however, never its fulfillment, and Auer maintained throughout his writings that art - or the monumental idealization of building - was the last and greatest effluence of culture.

In remarking on this dualism, Auer echoed what had been evident throughout the earlier discourse on architectural function: that it has two connected, yet contrasting souls. As Auer described the age-old paradox, the first rests firmly on the ground and is ordered by practical needs, while the second is elevated in the heavenly stirring of high regions, where the task is to serve pure beauty. Auer's metaphors of the practical ground and beautiful heavens poignantly expressed his transferal of the age-old dualism to the new pursuit of space. Space, to use Auer's biological analogy, was described as the soul of a building, that spiritual essence enclosed and filled-out by the forms, the body of the building.⁵⁶ Firstly, the ground plan and building enclosure - the two-dimensions of width and depth - are the products of basic human needs. Secondly, all is different in the dimension of height. Here architecture literally soars beyond human necessities, and responds to the soul of the viewers. The impulse to create great, tall spaces goes far beyond human necessities, and represents the freeing up of the human imagination.⁵⁷

By coupling the development of spatial composition with structural systems, Auer was inevitably confronted with the possibilities of nineteenth century technological advances, and specifically structural maneuvers in iron. As he wrote:

Ganz natürlich, das Eisen erfüllt beiden höchsten Anforderungen der Baukonstruktion: möglichst wenig, möglichst dünne Stützen und Solide, wetter- und feuersichere Decke, in unübertroffener Weise; alle grösseren

Probleme werden mit Hülfe des Eisens spielend, in leichter und solider Ausführung verwirklicht.⁵⁸

Yet, Auer cautioned that iron's catholic appeal to all constructive uses dispenses with too many of the ideas of architectural beauty. We are told that iron is too flexible, and if adopted for monumental building, it would blur the dualism of artistic expressions - that of trabeations and arcuation - which has existed since ancient Egypt. Iron, to put it simply, would erase the subtle spatial aesthetics which stone and masonry architecture had created over the millennia. Because of its tensile strength, it is doubtless a useful *Hilfsmittel* for spatial enlargement and security of stone joints. But, as Auer concurred with the earlier debate on iron, monumental spatial expression cannot be accomplished in iron.

As he discussed in his later article, "Moderne Stylfragen" (1885), the neo-Baroque stone style represented a union of imaginative elegance with technical virtuosity. In this respect, the contemporary Viennese Baroque meets the spiritual needs of our time, those of individuality connected to constructive and artistic traditions.⁵⁹ Because of the Renaissance/Baroque mastery of constructive systems, construction is no longer the decisive reason for the development of a style. Ironically, while condemning iron for its flexible strength, Auer praised the Renaissance formal vocabulary for the freedom it brought to the artistic imagination. His paradoxical stance depended on a contrast he saw between constructive and artistic systems in a building. What was not sound for a rigid structural shell, was nonetheless fit for the decorative purposes of art.

In his earlier article (1880) on constructive systems, Auer was crystal clear about the important victory which enabled the Renaissance artist to design freely within both constructive stone systems:

Wie in jener Zeit überhaupt die Individualität des einzelnen Menschen in allen Gebieten anfang, sich Geltung zu verschaffen, so konnte nun auch in der Kunst die Individualität des Künstlers frei heraustreten. Er ist nicht mehr an die traditionelle Constructionsmethode gebunden, das ganze Gebiet der Baugeschichte mit allen ihren Principien liegt wie eine glückliche

überstandene Lehrzeit hinter ihm und er bedient sich des Gelernten und Geübten, wie er es bedarf.⁶⁰

Thus, the Renaissance-Baroque ornamental vocabulary was elevated by Auer on the basis of its possession of the requisite flexibility to adjust to each practical need while continuing to express the individuality of ones time. In merging the idea of imaginative artistic freedom with the constrained constructive spirit of a particular architectural style, Auer felt he was able to avoid arbitrariness. In concluding his article on the influence of construction of style he wrote:

und darum muss er auch mehr als je festhalten an den altererbten und bewährten Formen, festhalten an den in den alten Monumenten verkörperten Gesetzen der Schönheit und der Proportionen, deren gewissenhaftes Studium sein Bemühen in den vier verflossenen Jahrhunderten war, und in ihnen den Halt und die Stütze finden, die er durch seine Befreiung aus den Fesseln der constructiven Nothwendigkeit verloren.⁶¹

While Auer's espousal of space may have promised revolutionary insights to functional design, he essentially subordinated the physical potentials of space to the aesthetic workings of the human mind.

In a series of articles written between 1889 and the early 1890s, Albert Hofmann continued some of Auer's researches into the influence of cultural conditions on architectural form. Yet, in the first article, "Die kunstgeschichtliche Stellung der Bauten für die Weltausstellung von 1889 in Paris" (1889), Hofmann advocated a philosophy of architectural design which he termed *Realismus*, and which overrode Auer's suspicions of monumental iron appearance. Hofmann's notion of *Realismus* lay in the power of constructive design to awaken the imagination. Constructive members such as iron, in other words, can stimulate ideal thoughts. Predictably, his theory presented a form of objectivity which aimed not to deny the personality of the artist, "*im Geiste der Konstruktion wie in der Formensprache der Dekoration bleibt ihm ein weites Feld zur Bethätigung seines künstlerischen Genies, seiner künstlerischen Eigenart.*"⁶² Nevertheless, explicitly linked to recent developments in the natural sciences, Hofmann saw *Realismus*

as the product of the innermost spirit of our century, that of non-prejudiced investigations. Foremost, Hofmann's idea of scientific investigations into architectural reality was based on his view that the internal content of works was more important than external appearance.

What struck Hofmann about the exhibition buildings at the 1889 Paris world exhibition, embodied by Gustav Eiffel's famous tower,⁶³ was the complete separation between construction and decoration.⁶⁴ Hofmann rejected the Semperian legacy, and regarded the true role of the architect as constructor of raw structures in compliance with physical laws. By contrast, the false role of the architect as decorator attempts to cover the rigid constructive members with artistic motives, the enlivenment of the surface with color or mosaics, or the use of terra cotta or metal relief patterns. Much of the 1889 exhibition exemplified Hofmann's new ideas about tectonic and material expression, the possibilities of a new constructive technology, iron. Consequently, Hofmann accepted the need to do away with much of traditional thinking about building appearance that does not conform to the new laws of iron construction.⁶⁵ Precisely because of the absence of decoration from the Hall of Machines, Hofmann recognized it as the most important building of the exhibition:

weil sie mit nicht dagewesener Kühnheit einen riesigen Raum überspannt und weil die Raumbeziehung von jeher zu den größten Thaten der Architektur gehört hat. Und entbehrt sie auch der hergebrachten Dekoration, so zweifle ich keinen Augenblick, dass es möglich ist, die gegebene Konstruktion in ästhetisch befriedigender Weise zu dekorieren.⁶⁶

Completely absent is decoration. The structure works its artistry through its powerful lines. It demonstrates utility, but also beauty and grandeur.

Despite reservations about the monumental expression of iron, and justification of historicist buildings at the Paris Exhibition, Hofmann helped set the stage for the enhanced appreciation of iron forms. In the writings of the Cologne architect Georg Heuser during the 1880s and 1890s, we find a further proclamation that iron forms will inherently

produce a new aesthetic style. Heuser carefully detailed the inevitable march of iron technology, the inventions of the steam engine and industrial production, and concluded that architecture must design its monumental forms of the future out of the strength and suppleness of iron.⁶⁷

Heuser concentrated his studies on the iron I-beam, or what he occasionally called the *Gefachform*, a structure with open hollow frames. The great value of the iron pier lay in the fact that it cost the same as other materials while offering greater resistance: "*die H-Eisen mit ihrem Minimum an Querschnittsmasse bei höchster Tragfähigkeit...*"⁶⁸ Realizing that iron allows new expansive spatial forms, as witnessed by his observation of iron buildings at the earlier 1878 Paris Exhibition, Heuser sought to realize in *Metalltekonik* the expressive form of artistic design of the future.⁶⁹ What is more, drawing on the development of iron technology in the 1840s and 1850s toward the I-beam, Heuser was able to predict its eventual artistic fruition:

Besteht der Steg aus voller Masse in verschiedenen Rohstoffen, so haben wir eine Körperliche, eine Monumental-Architektur vor Augen, bei welcher das Prinzip 'Gurt und Steg' sowohl mit seinem Vorzug der Stabilität, wie auch mit seinem gegensätzlichen Zierreichthum als Kunstgedanke verwerthet werden kann.⁷⁰

In championing iron, however, Heuser did not propose the elimination of surface ornament. More in the spirit of Bötticher he wrote: "*Die nackte Zweckform, eine nüchterne Konstruktion kann als Gerüst dienen für ein fröhliches Festkleid, als Mantelstock einer bedeutungsvollen symbolischen Dekoration.*"⁷¹

Instead of proposing a completely sober expression of constructive iron members, as would later be the case in the works of Mies van der Rohe, Heuser was deeply concerned about what kind of ornament is appropriate to the iron *Gefachstil*. Desirous of elevating design through artistic means, Heuser saw iron technology's potential for artistic embellishment as through analogies to earlier structural systems. If cylindrical supports have given forth so many diverse column orders, then it seems logical that the motives for

decoration on the many-sided iron support will be even greater. Bötticher's ideas are evident in Heuser's proposal for new artistic forms arising from iron technology: "*wir können nur versuchen, aus der gegebenen neuen Werkform allgemeine Regeln für viele Gattungen zukünftiger Kunstformen abzuleiten.*"⁷² Likewise, Heuser's acceptance of the role of artistic symbolism in architecture is underscored by his proposal for non-structural decoration in iron. He tells us that because of its lively shapes and powerful effects of shadows the influence of iron in architecture is not merely limited to structure: "*die getheilte Werkform hat auch eine gleich lebhaft gezeichnete Schmuckform zur Folge.*"⁷³

If fully at peace with the role of ornament in architecture, Heuser's theoretical battle lay with the tradition of incrustation, and the Semperian notion of *Bekleidung*. Should, in other words, the palpable qualities of iron beams be covered with other materials (presumably stone) or should they be left open to the air? In his essay on iron frames of 1884, "Die Stabilrahmen, Strukturformen der Metall-Tektonik und ihre Nachbildung in anderen Rohstoffen," Heuser at first accepted that all works of mankind possess both *Schmuck* and *Bekleidung*. Yet, a few paragraphs later, citing the innate beauty of the human skeleton, he commented that a *Rohbau* can have a powerful impression on the viewer, as man is often pleased by the naked unclothed frame: "*dass wir den Stoff eines Rüstwerks, eines Kernschemas, weniger zu bilden oder mit einem Kunstgewand zu bekleiden brauchen, wenn er an und für sich schon ein Wohlgefallen hervorzurufen im Stande ist.*"⁷⁴ This initial confusion as to the principle of incrustation was a product of his inability to cast off lightly Semper's important theoretical postulate. Yet, it is clear in subsequent articles that Heuser's continued fidelity to Semper was much more the result of the latter's principles of artistic evolution and the notion that the development of cultural symbols proceeds in conjunction with advances with material technology.

In the late 1880s, Heuser came under the influence of Darwin's theory of the evolution of natural forms and was adding an admixture of Darwinism to his original Semperian orientation.⁷⁵ Thus we see that in his article, "Keime eines neuen Baustils" (1888), he emphasized that one looks for a genealogy of artistic thinking, the rise and disappearance of ornamental forms out of natural necessity.⁷⁶ In "Darwinistisches über Kunst und Technik" (1890), Heuser advanced his thoughts about art as a natural organism. He contended that art is a blossoming of nature, and utterly subject to its laws. Bringing up the observation that both Goethe and Dürer had written of the importance of man's genealogy, Heuser advanced the Semperian notion that the evolutionary ornamental forms in building styles had great similarities to developments in the kingdom of organic creatures. Comparing Darwin to Semper, he wrote: *Dort untersuchungen über die Abstammung des Menschen und hier gleichzeitig Solche über die Entstehung menschlicher Kunstgedanken.*⁷⁷ Heuser's quest is to establish judgement of human *Formgedanken* according to the same point of view as that of natural forms: *"Die Kunst kann sich demnach ebenso wenig von der Natur befreien, wie der Geist vom Körper, die Kraft vom Stoff."*⁷⁸

Transference of art to the realm of natural phenomenon, however, went far beyond Semper's intentions. It set forth a much stronger argument over the appreciation of structural forms. Heuser compared the constructive system of a building to that of a natural organism, and quoted extensively from Ernst Kapp's Grundlinien einer Philosophie der Technik (1877). Kapp wrote on a variety of philosophical topics and was the main representative of the school of Karl Ritter. In this, his most important work, the notion of organ projection becomes a new factual starting point for a study of human activity. Kapp had written that the projection of the human self through, first the hands, and later tools, contains the fundamental explanation of human creation. Hand tools, and later machine tools, are extensions of the human organs:

Von den primitiven Werkzeugen erweitert sich der Begriff aufwärts bis zu den Werkzeugen der besonderen Berufsthätigkeiten, den Maschinen der Industrie, der Bewaffung bei der Kriegsführung, den Instrumenten und Apparaten der Kunst und Wissenschaft, und umfasst mit dem Einen Wort Artefacte das ganze System der an den Bereich der mechanischen Technik gehörenden Bedürfnisse, wo nur immer der Mensch 'die Hand im Spiele hat,' mögen sie der täglichen Nothdurft dienen oder Gegenstände des Schmuckes und der Bequemlichkeit sein.⁷⁹

Mechanical activity, in other words, was understood by Kapp as a continuation of human organicity, an outward expression of one's inner imaginative world.⁸⁰ As a consequence, all artistic and creative activity arises during instrumental activity.

Writing that it is an organ projection that comes to the forefront in the appearance of an architectural form, Heuser added that: "*gleichwie das thierische Knochengewebe durch das eiserne Gitterwerk, so werden die Knochengelenke in den Drehpunkten der Stabkonstruktion nachgebildet.*"⁸¹ The anthropomorphic standpoint of Kapp's work came to represent a metaphor for Heuser's constructive system of iron structural members. Moreover, in the Darwinistic sense of nature's unconscious creation, the structural forms of architecture are given precedence by Heuser for the decorative forms which arise out of them. It would be impossible then to encrust the iron structural members in the manner advocated by Semper. In this definition of Heuser's *Gerüststil*, the early uneasy acceptance of incrustation was abandoned by the time of his later writings. Thus, Heuser differed from Semper, and foreshadowed Otto Wagner, in his contention that a building style must be based on a physically-determined constructive system and not an historically-evolved scheme of ornamentation.

We find a similar attitude in the Viennese architect Leopold Bauer's contention that a general architectural design from iron will only be possible when we develop iron constructive elements into elements of art. In "Die alte und neue Richtung in der Baukunst" (1898), Bauer apparently concurred with Heuser's assessment that the basic steps of architectural design are: 1.) the constructive system; and 2.) its beautification. In this tradition of Bötticher, Bauer reiterated that the ultimate motive of the formal speech

of a *Kunstform* must be a constructive-material principal; the longing to find "*die erlösende Formensprache*."⁶² Clearly, the composite theory of structure-cladding as advocated by Semper was losing ground by the early 1890s. Iron was gaining acceptance as an expressive building material alongside that of stone. As Cornelius Gurlitt put it, materials would determine aesthetic sense, and not the reverse: "*Es handelt sich also nicht um die Frage; wie bilden wir das Eisen, damit es unserem Empfinden entspreche! sondern um die viel wichtigere; wie bilden wir unser Empfinden, daß es dem Eisen entspreche?*"⁶³

Building materials and constructive systems, nullified by centuries of artistic compromise in the classical (and subsequent historicist languages), clearly emerged to play a leading role in architectural form-making in the 1890s. In light of this long repression, one of the main features of a realist architecture was the theatrical display of these elements. Otto Wagner's *Moderne Architektur*, which first appeared in 1896, represents a conventional point of departure for most histories of realist architecture in Central Europe. On account of the directness of his prose and stark power of his metaphors, Wagner was a commanding presence for all debate on the vast habitat of iron technology and industrial design.

Nevertheless, as this and earlier chapters have made apparent, Wagner's chosen path to modernity was by no means devoid of background. For, after all, it emphasized the age-old importance of the architect's ability to perceive societal needs. The same pugnacious perception of need has been noted in the German-language discourse on *Kunstgewerbe* and architecture throughout the century. In like manner, Wagner also felt it true that a change in architectural style always be based upon a change in society; new methods of construction, materials, human tasks and viewpoints.⁶⁴ As he wrote: "Need, purpose, construction, and idealism are therefore the primitive germs of artistic life. United in a single idea, they produce a kind of 'necessity' in the origin and existence of every work of art."⁶⁵ Yet, since Wagner's integrative use of the concepts need and ideal in

the same thought stirred the same confusion in discursive circles as did Semper's similar appropriation a generation earlier, critical reviewers of Wagner found cause alternatively to designate him a crass materialist or a servant to aesthetic formulae.

In fact, although Wagner strongly believed in the idealization of building needs, he assumed that the contours of design led first from new needs to constructive possibilities, and only then to artistic signification. In other words, new needs give birth to new methods of construction, which in turn yield new forms to be decorated. Thus, despite his wide range of architectural generative influences, Wagner placed much greater stress on construction as the primitive cell of architecture than had commonly been the case. Utility prepares the way for art. "Composition must always conform to the material and the technology, and not the reverse. Therefore composition must clearly reveal the material of construction and the technology used."⁸⁶ This stress on reason, scientific achievements, and practical tendency led to Wagner's embrace of iron and engineering technologies. It also created a fresh materialist parlance which defied the aesthetics of reasoning common to architectural design.

Persistence of the Ideal

In "Architektonische Zeitfragen" (1898) Richard Streiter praised Wagner's Moderne Architektur as a magnificent achievement, that of encouraging the artistic expression of modern living conditions:

Der Ruf nach reinen Natur, nach Wahrheit ertönte überall, auch in der Kunst. Das Idealisieren, das Einkleiden in ein schmuckreiches, nach herkömmlichen Schönheitsregeln zugeschnittenes Gewand würde verpönt: die geschärfte Beobachtung richtete sich auf das Zunächstliegende, dem wahrheitsfanatischen Forschungseifer unmittelbar und in vollen Umfang sich Darbietende, auf die Natur, auf den modernen Menschen, das moderne Leben.⁸⁷

As Streiter made clear, the demand by Wagner for truth and naturalness - constructive realism - in architecture was the continuation of a progressive tradition in architectural

thought dating back to the French Enlightenment. It was present already in the writings of Cordemoy and Laugier, who spoke out against forms which did not spring from primary construction, and was echoed later in texts on medieval materialism by Hübsch and Stier.⁸⁸ Yet, Streiter felt that the power of Wagner's words was altogether stronger since the contemporary age is more suited than any previous period to express the reality of constructive systems in architectural forms. What that means is that modern engineering technology will not be restricted to the sphere of utilitarian construction, but will be applied with catholic volition to further the development of all aspects of culture.

Surely, the stress on realism in Wagner's understanding of architecture appears to be more synthetic than analytic. It is, in other words, constructed out of raw experience and emergent changes in modern life rather than a dissection of architectural traditions. This would appear also to be the case in Joseph August Lux's related vision of an architecture adapted to genuine life in world cities. Following the lead of Wagner, in Die moderne Wohnung und ihre Ausstattung (1905), Lux enumerated the impressive new aspects of life in the big city: all-night illumination, enormous size, rapid and frequent communication. And, following the lead of Wagner, the Viennese writer Lux was quick to point out that productive relations and the development of technology and industry facilitate a modern language of architectural forms.⁸⁹

Die unmittelbare Anknüpfung an die Natur, an die funktionellen Bedürfnisse und Gewohnheiten des Menschen schließt grundsätzlich die Wiederholung gebrauchter historischer Formen aus und eröffnet ungeahnte Gestaltungsmöglichkeiten, die eine lebendige organische Beziehung zu unserem Wesen unterhalten.⁹⁰

At the core of Lux's conception of life in a great city stand the seminal concepts of *Benützbarkeit, Zweckmäßigkeit, Bequemlichkeit*. He pointed out that new dwellings should incorporate the urbanity and customs of these uniquely modern *Lebensgewohnheiten*. Further, these qualities have effaced old notions of style, and any new idea of style, as Lux saw it, must maintain place and significance, the new style will be directed from below and

not above.⁹¹ On these points, one can see that there are certainly strong elements in both Wagner's and Lux's writings which evidence a disregard for prior considerations of the architectural ideals of tradition, artistic symbolism, and composition.

The emergence of a seemingly realist language in the texts just discussed reveals two aspects of architectural thought in the 1880s and 1890s. First, it certifies that architectural discourse ardently pursued a philosophy of design concerned with material and structural aspects of building. In contrast to Semper, and in an advance from Bötticher, the new technology of iron was appreciated more and more on its own merits. Secondly, the discourse on realism confirms our earlier claim that an analysis of real conditions represents a commitment to action. In accordance with modern architecture's often-stated mission to change society, realism continued to embody the formidable capacity of architecture to create a myth of itself. Architecture, presenting itself as a real response to human needs and natural forces, also projected an image exceeding the actuality of this mission. Within realism, the intent of architecture to integrate an ideal into design remained powerful.

Early in the nineteenth century, Schinkel had epitomized the contradictory dance of the ideal and real in the determination of beauty, the rhythm of physical needs supplanted by the raising of architecture by the mind to a higher plane.⁹² Among those late nineteenth century realist architectural writers we have discussed, function, materials and construction were not unified at the expense of the ideologies of art and history. Perhaps as a result of the inconclusiveness of these theorists on the matter, but more likely because of an energy stimulated by the very urge for realistic description, the search for the ideal persisted as an integral component of the modern temperament in twentieth century architectural theory.

In Gruner's "Die Lüge in der Baukunst" (1888), both of these directions are present. Gruner believed that architecture should accept realist requirements and yet also elevate

the forms created from those requirements to a higher plane. He began his argument by stating that buildings too often lie with their facades. Exploiting the numerous cases where architectural plans have no real occasion or cause, Gruner labeled such design as disfunctional, effaced by the dangers of fashion and personal taste. By contrast, in the case of pure utilitarian buildings it is customary to see the same form and arrangement which their purpose and naked necessity requires, an architectonic sense in which materials show themselves to be what they actually are. By definition, Gruner suggested an end for thoughtless copying, and the masking of true materials such as iron.

Through these notions of a functional plan and honesty of material appearance Gruner seemed to launch a purely realist approach to functional design. Indeed, as he put it himself, a strategy of functional honesty means that a really true architecture style cannot be chosen. Construction, furthermore, was announced as the introduction to architectural form; and design proceeds *"zunächst aus der Art der Raumüberdeckung, so dann aber aus Zweck, Material, Zeitgeist, Richtung und Maass der Künstlerischen Befähigung des Architekten sich für jedes Bauwerk von selbst ergeben sollte."*⁹³ The notion of abandoning the urge to create a mythology through ornament, however, is not Gruner's. If architectural styles may not be arbitrarily chosen, and must respond to utilitarian demands, architecture must also possess style, an ornamental vocabulary.⁹⁴ Gruner's retreat in the second half of his article went as far as to accept stylistic eclecticism in regard to building type. In this context, he spoke of the impossibility of breaking out of the closure of existing styles: *"unsere Aufgabe ist es vielmehr, diese uns vererbten Formen mit modernen Geiste zu erfüllen und naturgemäss, ohne Ueberstürzung mit Verständniss und richtigem Empfinden uns nutzbar zu machen."*⁹⁵

If we return to Richard Streiter's essay on Otto Wagner, we again detect a central conflict within the emerging theories of architectural realism, that is, the uncertain relationship between inductive and deductive thought in the supposition of architectural

forms. Specifically, Streiter questioned whether Wagner went too far in making necessity a virtue.⁹⁶ In other words, he protested the belief that architectural form can be based, as he interpreted Wagner, solely on construction. As Streiter looked into historical building styles he quickly noticed that a great number of factors other than constructive necessity affect the final outcome of architectural form. Otherwise, all building styles utilizing the same basic constructive principles would appear almost identical. But, *"Wie ganz anders gestaltet sind alle Formen des griechischen Säulenbaues gegenüber des ägyptischen, und doch ist hier wie dort das gleiche Konstruktionsprinzip vorhanden."*⁹⁷

In addition, as he was sensitive to the English complaint against machine production and standardization of the practical arts, Streiter confronted whether Wagner's theory of architecture was inordinately composed of the unartistic elements of the modern age. As Streiter saw it, functional, material and technological objectivity are extremely important, but do not encompass the complete spectrum of architectural creativity. Wagner's seeming rejection of the long-chain of stylistic transformations was too radical. Arguing that the character of a building cannot be created from construction alone, Streiter added that a building must emerge: *"sondern auch aus dem Milieu, aus der Eigenart der jeweilig vorhandenen Baustoffe, aus der landschaftlich und geschichtlich bedingten Stimmungen der Oertlichkeit heraus zu entwickeln."*⁹⁸ Realism and objectivity do not make a modern art, but are only the healthy natural foundations for it.⁹⁹

Above all, for Streiter, the most serious drawback to Wagner's theory was that he did not consider how an inner *Formgefühl* influences both the determination of needs and the construction of forms. Streiter accepted a determined *Formgefühl* as the supreme notion of deductive thinking, and the principal influence on construction and building form. Obviously paralleling Alois Riegl's studies of an evolving *Kunstwollen* in human history, Streiter was skeptical of an overtly empirical, and realist theory. His point was, then, that a division of architectural labor between idealism and realism is untenable. Both aspects

of architectural creation must be retained, or else design would slip into, on the one hand, historic styles unrelated to modern needs, or, on the other, artless materialism:

In einer Zeit beispiellos vielseitigen Vorwärtsdrängens und Umgestaltens, wo so viele Kunst feindliche Mächte verwirrend, zerfetzen, zerstörend wirken, wo ein ruhiges stetiges Wachsen und Ausreifen wurzelechter Triebe so selten zu finden ist, wo auch die Besten nicht die selbstbewußte Ueberzeugung hegen können, daß das so überaus massenhaft und schnell geschaffene Neue in Durchschnittswert dem aus Kunstgünstigern Zeiten uns Ueberlieferten auch nur annähernd gleichgesetzt werden könne, in solcher Zeit ist die Anhänglichkeit an das Alte nicht eine sentimentale Schwäche, sondern eine natürliche, tiefbegründete Folgererscheinung, ein Segen, eine Pflicht.¹⁰⁰

Streiter accepted that idealist thinking forms a central part of the architectural arguments of all modernists. The case for idealism is seen in: 1.) the concern for subjective, individual design in conformity with the German handwerk tradition; 2.) the *a priori* use of classical ground plans as expressed by symmetry and dominant axes. We see this clearly in the English Arts and Crafts movement, where Streiter contrasted the importance of English artistic individualism over the Austrian Wagner's practical-industrial approach.

Nevertheless, Streiter was aware that the congruity of idealist expression with the constructive and use-values of a building was also integral to Otto Wagner. Ideal conceptions are present throughout Wagner's works; his elevation of iron to an aesthetic plane, and his conservation of the academic plan as set against the goal of designing from plan to facade. Wagner used decoration frequently in the Semperian or Renaissance sense, independent of the actual construction of the building masses. Wagner's sense for both symmetry and proportions, on the one side, and materials and technology, on the other, like Heuser's pursuit of an aesthetic and historicist vocabulary of iron forms, complicates any simple conclusion of a modern functionalist teleology based solely upon the beauty of raw forms. Thus, Streiter discerned that for Wagner, the overall relationship between construction and artistic symbolism remained ambivalent.¹⁰¹

Neither Gruner nor Streiter were the only theorists at the end of the nineteenth century to cultivate discussion on the antinomy of separating idealism and realism in

architecture. The shifting sands between the real and ideal are also evident in the continuing debate on iron toward the end of the century. Despite, as we have seen, the increasing acceptance of the use of visible iron members for a building's supports and facade, new attacks on iron were launched, emphasizing again that the transparency of its structure was not compatible with the idealization of monumentality. The emergent philosophy of realism stimulated a new discourse on ideal values.

In his "Stil-Betrachtungen" (1890), K.E.O. Fritsch had warned against overestimating the value of iron, commenting that Semper also said that iron could in no way be a complete construction material. As wood had revealed earlier, iron has only one use: *"der Eisenbau wird immer als ein Zimmerwerk auftreten."*¹⁰² Likewise, Robert Neumann wrote a few years later that iron construction is most appropriate for interiors, especially in the assembly of roof supports. As far as exterior use, though, he again saw it limited because of the need to fill circumscribed frames. *"Auf die Gestaltung der Wände und Mauern wird das Eisen überhaupt wohl wenig Einfluß üben, dagegen mehr auf die Bildung der freistehenden Stützen und Säulen, die der Natur des Eisens entsprechen sich sehr schlank gestalten lassen."*¹⁰³ Finally, in "Zur Ästhetik der Eisenarchitektur" (1902) Heinrich Pudor's account of iron's potential closely resembled idealist attitudes of the preceding half-century, as he made no attempt to conceal his disdain for the mingling of iron and stone forms on the visible parts of a building. Commenting that until now iron has been the province of engineering, he could not visualize how iron's static relations can produce artistic effect. As an expressive material, Pudor found iron in its childhood, and believed that iron structure, like animal bone systems, must be kept to the inside, and covered with the equivalent of flesh and blood.¹⁰⁴

We also note the perseverance of idealism in L. Trzeschtik's acceptance of the idea that it was architecture's principal task as an art form to symbolize man's inner life.¹⁰⁵ To this end, The Viennese architect Trzeschtik advocated using certain laws, like the

Golden Section, to prevent the worst abuses of architecture's artistic nature.¹⁰⁶ Yet, of course, he recognized that architecture's double-nature (its 'additional' requirements in the direction of purpose) prevent the unyielding pursuit of this objective. Consequently, Trzeschtik reasoned that architecture must make use of the other fine arts to accomplish the all-important goals of artistic idealization:

Trotz allen ihren eigenen Hilfsmitteln, wie sie hier angedeutet sind, ist jedoch die Architektur an sich nicht immer im Stande, den ästhetischen Zweck der vollsten und möglichsten Symbolisierung und Idealisierung zu erreichen, sie muss sich daher auch fremder Mittel bedienen und diese werden ihr von der Plastik, der Malerei, und relativ auch in der Gartenkunst geboten.¹⁰⁷

As such, for him, the essence of architecture lay partly in needs, but more in a conscious artistic drive, an ingenious impetus to create imaginative idealistic creations under the aegis of the clear-seeing intellect.¹⁰⁸

It is an analogous longing for a central artistic focus in architecture that caused Jacob Prestel, in "Realismus und Architektur" (1900), to champion the ideals and harmonic images of an art work. In a direct challenge to the realism of Otto Wagner and others, Prestel announced the need to abandon the current symptoms of "*eines phantasielosen Egoismus und nüchternen Materialismus*."¹⁰⁹ In this sense, he regarded contemporary realists in architecture as maintaining an utterly unfruitful adage: "*aus den toten constructiven Systemes frische Kunstmotive und Formen gestalten zu wollen*."¹¹⁰ Starting from the artistic premise of architecture, Prestel thought the key value in building is its aesthetic formal essence. In such true architecture, moreover, artistic ideas (rules of proportion, direction, and symmetry) command and emancipate the *Kunstform* from the materials and structure. In a related article, "Neue Motive der Architektur" (1901) Prestel reiterated the tenor of the earlier article, and lamented that today, among the various new directions in building, one misses a leading spiritual idea.¹¹¹ The structure of idealist presence is constituted by Prestel to lie in Classicism, which he considers "*die ewig unermessliche Fundgrube ästhetisch geistiger Ideen*."¹¹²

Artistic Individualism

In the debates on the real and ideal in architecture, historicist design most frequently derived from the latter position. But, as we have seen earlier with Sempër and Redtenbacher, such was not always the case. A strong tradition professed the interrelationship between historical forms and material processes. In the first decade of the twentieth century, it became current again to bridge the gap between the ideal and the real, and by doing so, to deny the philosophical roots for their opposition in the Cartesian dualism between mind and body. Refusing to locate historical traditions across a divide from practical needs, certain writers arrived at the conclusion that the sublime workings of the artistic imagination were the clue to uniting architecture's dualistic nature.

Cornelius Gurlitt regarded the artistic mind as capable of amalgamating scientific progress and historical values. His theory retained the stylistic vocabulary of the Renaissance and Baroque ages while rejecting idealist aesthetics and mathematical rules of proportion. For Gurlitt, design criteria should not follow a fixed notion of beauty, residing in the spirit or in ideas, a general ideal, but should follow real tasks. In an article on theories of architecture in the nineteenth century, he emphasized that we search for our art, not in ideals or in types, but in material requirements. "*Das Individualisieren der Aufgabe, ihre Erfüllung in allen Teilen - das schwebt der modernen Baukunst als letzte Aufgabe vor.*"¹¹³

As represented in Gurlitt's theory, advocacy of individual taste in artistic determination was a major new paradigm at the end of the nineteenth century. Likewise, in the essay, "Ueber die Wahrheit in der Architektur" (1901-02) Karl Henrici, challenged the prevalent directions in architectural theory which seek to divide concerns between the purely formal and the purely technical; or the expression of symbolic and artistic aims, on the one hand, and the articulation of structure and constructive systems, on the one other. To begin with, he asserted that the requirement that as much of the construction be left

visible as possible is unjustified and unattainable.¹¹⁴ While Henrici admitted that in bridges, ships, and towers there is an unmistakable beauty of the constructive line, for buildings he found a need to accept the place of unconstructive creations. Like Richard Streiter, he was aware that construction does not dictate the appearance of all architectural forms, and especially those concerned with artistic symbolism. In order for a building to be artistic, we are told by Henrici, it must recognize which purpose it serves. Therefore, it is the functions contained within a building, and not the constructive system, that is decisive for external form.¹¹⁵ Given these considerations, it appears that the individual taste for the final chosen form is decisive. As is apparent, what Henrici ultimately had in mind for the external facades of buildings is a symbolism of monumental forms. And, perhaps, it is no surprise that he culminated his discussion with a nod to Paul Wallot's Reichstag building in Berlin, as the epitome of a successful monumentalization of the high feeling of national unity.¹¹⁶

Like other idealists, Henrici's opposition to constructive or functional design was based upon his belief in architecture as a monumental art. Since the goal of monumental art, as he saw it, is to bring expression to great religious or national thoughts, the external form of a building must exceed narrow functional requirements. To some extent, monumentalization is the most sublime function of architecture. How Henrici intended to reconcile the demands of internal space and external cladding is the subject of "Von Innen nach Aussen oder von Aussen nach Innen?" (1903). Here, claiming architecture as the art of *Raumbildung*, Henrici saved a place for symbolic monumentalization in his advocacy of the importance of "*raumflächen*" and "*körperbildende und schmuckende Kunst*."¹¹⁷

Asserting, like Bötticher, that *Raum* and *Hülle* are inseparable, he advocated for the integrated development of the plan and the facade. The question of designing from the facade or the plan becomes irrelevant. Neither the plan, nor the facade, can be abstracted

without regard for the other. One designs from a complete idea of what the building is intended to be:

Des Architekten Aufgabe ist es, Gebilde zu erzeugen mit gesunden Kern in gesunder Schale oder mit gesunder Seele in gesunden Körper. Einerlei ist's dabei, ob er seinen schöpferischen Gedankengang vorwiegen von aussen nach innen oder von innen nach aussen richtet... Die Hauptsache aber ist, dass das Innen und das Aussen sich ergänzen und decken zu harmonischer, Auge und Herz erfreuenden Einheit.¹¹⁸

The idea of a unitary design from both artistic individualism and material-technological requirements was very popular.

Gustav Ebe anticipated Henrici in "Architektonische Raumlehre" (1900) when he wrote that design in architecture proceeds equally from both inside and outside. Although originally independent of each other, Ebe's vision of the perfected work embodies a shell and core united into a harmonious whole. *"Natur is weder Kern noch Schale, alles ist sie mit einemale."*¹¹⁹ Just like natural products, architecture is an indivisible whole. The unification of the facade with the plan provides an explanation for the centrality of both artistic and constructive matters in design. According to this reading, Ebe understood the inner essence of architecture as the transcendental bond between the imagination and static laws. Ebe was clear that although architecture serves a function, it must not place *"die Nützlichkeitsforderungen allzustark in den Vordergrund, so dass keine höhere Idee zum Ausdruck gebracht wird, so kann kein Kunstwerk entstehen..."*¹²⁰

This latter wave of writing on individualism accepted in large part the paramount value of expressing reflective forms of thought in architecture while remaining cognizant of needs. These writings, and the others which have focussed on idealism, contradict any simple notion that architectural thought as it entered the twentieth century was increasingly abandoning ideal values. Ideals - the raising of functional needs through reference to art, history, religion, philosophy, and the individual imagination - continued to demand expression in architecture. These sentiments are doubtless the explicit confirmation of the nineteenth century's longing for wholeness. If architecture could be

raised to a higher spiritual plane, perhaps then it could also achieve that completeness which seemed to lie so far outside the ambiguities of everyday life in the cosmopolitan city. That the sources of this longing exist outside of the immediate given is testimony to the fact that architectural writers, whether idealist or realist, sought to recover an image of the unified consciousness of creation which had existed in the past.

To be sure, many of the realist theories discussed above purport to achieve this goal: to restage the architectural act as rational action upon a purposive need at hand. The distinctive feature of a realist architectural philosophy is a doctrine of creation completely faithful to apparent needs. By treating observable realities as the carriers of truth, theorists of realism strove toward active creation. Yet, these notions of apparent needs and active creation, as we have emphasized above, do not refer to immanent conditions. Dependent on reflection, they refer to transcendent values, or ideals. The claim of realism to do away with reflective nostalgia therefore is naive. As it turns out, realism recognizes needs in the desire for change. Since the purpose realist architecture bases its claims upon is not yet at hand, its function is as much determined by ideals as by given realities. The ontological connection of speculation and reflection with action and analysis confirms the coeval existence in texts of the ideal alongside the real.

Human needs being as complex as they are, no building could possibly represent their definitive and final spectrum. On this point, Loos was in complete agreement. Loos's critique of design conventions, rather than resting on the authority of philosophical absolutes, was an articulation of the art of compromise. Despite the acidity on the surface of his pages, he never argued that architecture should be the actual representation of nature or society. The truth of architecture to its time, Loos argued, depends on a relation between the forms of a building and the people who use it. Architectural truth, moreover, hinges on a suppression of individualistic tendencies. His criticism of the Secession, as we will see in the next Chapter, owed as much to his desire to reject total architectural control

over the design process as his wish to rid design of the personal. He argued persuasively that a building should socially adapt to the changing purposes and uses for which it is needed.

Loos, as we have seen however, was also seduced by the possibility of deducing the forms of architecture and the practical arts from a rationale of human needs. He realized that human needs change over time, but failed to recognize that even within a given time great distinction marks the range of human activity. This variety within culture was obviously antithetical to Loos's potent image of the well-educated and cultured man in western society. But, human needs are not uniform, especially considering the complex relationships of power between social groups in the modern city. Thus, Loos's stated quest to embody architectural needs realistically was illusory. It is as unattainable an extreme as an architecture based solely upon non-existent idealities. While architecture could never escape completely into poetry, so too it cannot become an applied science.

What striving toward the real and the ideal demonstrate is the widespread epistemological urge within architectural culture for an end to history and theory. This urge represents, fundamentally, a denial of difference. The revelation of an idealist or realist philosophy of design, as intimated by the Hegelian dialectic, could only occur when human history is over and the cycle of change and rebirth has finally ended. Given architecture's concrete needs for existence, discourse of course did not adopt the spiritual utopia Hegel had in mind. Rather, architectural writers set forth a range of utopic visions modelled on past and future scenarios. The important circumstance in all cases was a vision that architecture would no longer be alienated from itself. Architects would have no need to re-examine their world and theory would also come to an end.

Yet, theory did not end, because differences only became more pronounced as modernization continued. Hence, the urge to write about architectural possibilities was as vibrant in the years after the First World War as in the years before. Of course, through

careful selections from the texts of the second half of the nineteenth century, different threads can be woven to create a linear, realist development in architectural theory. As we have seen, however, the broader the range of texts is allowed to grow, the more difficult it is to read any clear sentiment, much less teleological direction. Therefore to neatly divide the discourse into progressive and reactionary camps on the basis of their response to real or ideal concerns is highly questionable.

If modernism was about re-investing design with un-selfconscious certitude, this goal was never achieved. Despite the impression gained in many histories of modern architecture, modernism did not represent itself as a transcendental force of functional or constructive determinacy in the real world. As a concept, the modern, full of its conflicting meanings, was dissimilarly represented. The signs grouped under the modern drew their authority from a wide shade of interpretations between the philosophical opposition between real and ideal. A heterogeneous representation of the concept function as it applies to architecture seems quixotic, but may reverse our idea of perversity so long accorded to Adolf Loos at the same time as it is denied for the modern movement.

Finally, the desire for absolutist design, for certainty and unity in modern architecture, did not diminish as the twentieth century began. As the last phase of discourse on individualism illustrated, architectural writers believed they could achieve a holistic synthesis. As we shall see in the next chapter, the idea of the indivisibility of architectural identity was a paramount response to the discontinuities of nineteenth century architectural thought. Forming the theoretical basis for the *Jugendstil* and *Art Nouveau*, the theory of unitary design sought to surmount the paradox of the real and ideal as we have discussed it. It sought to tame those philosophical antinomies which deny architectural modernism a unitary voice. The aesthetization of the machine, and marriage of the individual artist with science would be potent instances of this effort.

Notes

1. As Michael Ermarth writes, throughout the 19th century a protracted conflict between idealism and realism animated philosophical debate. Commonly, idealism was identified with an attitude composed of the critical, transcendental, romantic, and absolute. Conversely, realism came to be defined through notions of the positivistic, naturalistic, and dialectical. Wilhelm Dilthey. The Critique of Historical Reason (Chicago: Chicago, 1978), p. 37.
2. Herrmann, Deutsche Baukunst des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts, p. 29.
3. G. Portig, p. 38.
4. Fritz Minkus, "Unser Styl," WBIZ 13.1896, p. 386.
5. As Hammerschmidt describes the concern for beauty in the material itself and not intentional figuration, he links this emancipation of the "reinen Fläche" to the influence of Ruskin. p. 38.
6. The Austria Polytechnical Institute was founded shortly after the Napoleonic Wars (1816-18) to train engineers for new industrial tasks. It was set up by the Imperial Hofbaurat, the state authority for building activity in the crown lands. Renata Kassal-Mikula, "Architecture from 1815-1848" in Vienna in the Biedermeier Era, p. 140.
7. On the theoretical battles fought about iron architecture see A.G. Meyer, Eisenbauten, ihre Geschichte und Ästhetik (Esslingen, 1907); Georg Kohlmaier, Eisen Architektur: Die Rolle des Eisens in der historischen Architektur der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts (Hannover: Curt Vincentz, 1982).
8. Karl Bötticher, "Das Prinzip der hellenischen und germanischen Bauweise," p. 119.
9. L. Bohnstedt, "Über die Bedeutung des Eisens für die Baukunst," DBZ 1.1867, p. 199.
10. Ibid., p. 207.
11. C. Schwatlo, "Eisen Konstruktion: Ueber die Anwendung, die baukunstlerische Berechtigung und Ausbildungsfähigkeit der Eisen-Konstruktion in Bezug auf den Baustyl der Gegenwart," ZPBK 30.1870, p. 21.
12. Ibid., pp. 26 & 34.
13. R. Lucae, "Über die ästhetische Ausbildung der Eisen-Konstruktionen, besonders in ihrer Anwendung bei Räumen von bedeutender Spannweite," DBZ 3.18703, p. 9.
14. Ibid., p. 10.
15. ILG, p. 133.
16. ILG, p. 135.
17. ILG, p. 135.
18. Portig, p. 31.

- 19.Minkus, p. 374.
- 20.Semper, "Preliminary Remarks on Polychrome Architecture and Sculpture in Antiquity," p. 48.
- 21.Semper, Der Stil, p. 227.
- 22.Ibid., p. 13.
- 23.Ibid., p. 231.
- 24.Semper, "The Four Elements of Architecture..." p. 104.
- 25.Constantin Lipsius, "Ueber die aesthetische Behandlung des Eisens im Hochbau," DBZ 12.1878, p. 365.
- 26.Ibid., p. 363.
- 27.Constantin Lipsius, Gottfried Semper in seiner Bedeutung als Architekt (Berlin: Deutschen Bauzeitung, 1880), p. 96.
- 28.Rudolf Redtenbacher, "Aphorismen über Baugeschichte-Schreibung" ABZ 43.1878, p. 3.
- 29.Ibid., p. 2.
- 30.Ibid., p. 6.
- 31.Adolf von Hildebrand, The Problem of Form in Painting and Sculpture, trans. Max Meyer & Robert Morris Ogden (New York: G.E. Steichert, 1907), p. 124.
- 32.ILG, p. 140.
- 33.ILG, p. 141.
- 34.ILG, p. 142.
- 35.ILG, p. 144.
- 36.Gravagnuolo, Adolf Loos, Theory and Works, p. 18.
- 37.Bötticher, Die Tektonik der Hellenen, p. 5.
- 38.Ibid., p. 14.
- 39.Ibid., p. 18.
- 40.Ibid., p. 7.
- 41.Ibid., p. 20.
- 42.These are more specifically referred to as: 1.) der ruckwirkenden Festigkeit und starren Unbeugbarkeit in der stützenden Saule; 2.) des statischen Conflictes welchen die abgestützte Lastung im Scheitel derselben ausübt; 3.) die Glieder des Juncturen. Die Tektonik..., p. 36. To take up an

example of how a Kunstform works, the Kymation was a comparable artistic image used by the Greeks to represent the static conflict that occurs along the seam or at the end of a Werkform member. It marks the end of the active member, and speaks overall of the unresolved termination of this conflict, working in two ways: "Indem einerseits das active Glied dem Conflict durch seine dem Angriffe gleiche statische Kraftleistung widerstreht, paralyisiert es ihn und hält das Gleichgewicht fest; dadurch erscheint es in seiner Leistung als selbstständig und für dieselbe abgeschlossen; auf der anderen Seite wird hiermit aber auch zugleich der angeschlossene Theil auf das Schärfste von ihm abgetrennt und gesondert." Die Tektonik..., p. 64.

43. As Bötticher wrote, "spielt keine einzige der Kunstformen auf ihn selbst, vielmehr immer bloß auf seine Leistung an; auch bleiben für jede Gattung von Material, Stein, Thon, Stuck Holz oder Metall, die Elemente der Kunstformen für der Ausdruck der gleichen Leistung stets die gleichen." Die Tektonik, p. 44.

44. Bötticher, Die Tektonik, p. 33.

45. Ibid., p. 31.

46. Ibid., p. 25.

47. Hermann Lotze, Geschichte der Aesthetik in Deutschland (München: J.G. Cotta'schen, 1868), p. 510.

48. Sebastian Müller, Kunst und Industrie: Ideologie und Organization des Funktionalismus in der Architektur (München: Carl Hanser, 1974), p. 27.

49. Lotze, Geschichte der Aesthetik in Deutschland, p. 509.

50. Ibid., p. 518.

51. Sigismund Wolff, "Beiträge zur Aesthetik der Baukunst," ZPBK 25.1865, p. 234.

52. Ibid., p. 235.

53. Heinzerling, "Die Bildungsgesetze der Formen in der Architektur," ABZ 33-34.1868-69, p. 299.

54. Ibid., p. 292.

55. Ibid., p. 296.

56. Hans Auer, "Die Entwicklung des Raumes in der Baukunst," ABZ 48.1883, p. 66.

57. Historically, Auer tells us that the development of spatial planning in architecture had to move between two poles, or spatial development processes. "Die Entwicklung des Raumes in der Baukunst," p. 73. The first process began along the Nile River in the great Egyptian temples, whose hypostyle halls columns were arranged in regularly-intervalled grids. In his mania for dualistic simplification Auer maintained that this attitude became the basis for all stone architecture, and led to the later development of the nave basilican plan. He associated this trabeated architecture of the column with the artistic feeling of absolute peace and harmony. The second process was a product of the ancient vaulted structures of Mesopotamia, and led to all masonry construction, and in particular, domed, central-plan buildings. Here, in the place of the simple, regularity of the colonnade is substituted the active, rhythmic movement of masses, the rich alternation of light and shadows, the powerful contrasts

of painterly groupings. "Der Einfluss der Construction auf die Entwicklung der Baustyle," November, 1880, p. 11.

58.Auer, "Die Entwicklung des Raumes in der Baukunst," p. 74.

59.For Auer, the meaning of the Renaissance as inheritor of the two systems of spatial organization implied that style no longer makes the artist. Rather, echoing Semper's advocacy of the flexible vocabulary of Renaissance forms, the artist now makes the style.

60.Hans Auer, "Der Einfluss der Construction auf die Entwicklung der Baustyle," p. 14.

61.Ibid., p. 18.

62.Albert Hofmann, "Die kunstgeschichtliche Stellung der Bauten für die Weltausstellung von 1889 in Paris," DBZ 23.1889, p. 543.

63.Despite its analogous structural honesty, Hofmann tagged the Eiffel Tower a thunderous exhibition fanfare, mostly because of its monstrous size which causes all architectural details to dissipate.

64.The constructive triumph of 1889 was widely hailed. A decade later Fritz Schumacher proclaimed "die Riesenspannung der Maschinenhalle, die Riesentürmung des Eiffelturms, die geistreiche farbige Zusammenspannung von Keramik und Eisen in den Kunstpalästen." Schumacher, "Die Geschmacksentwicklung auf der Pariser Weltausstellung," in Streifzüge, p. 170.

65.Hofmann recommended that we create unconscious aesthetic laws for iron supports: Wir werden bei Anwendung von Eisen eine größere Last auf eine dünnere Stütze bringen und wir werden uns ebenso daran gewöhnen müssen, wie man sich im Alterthume allmählich daran gewöhnt hat, an die Stelle des schweren 4 oder 8 kantigen Pfeilers der ägyptischen Gräber die schlanke korinthische Säule der Römer zu setzen." "Die kunstgeschichtliche Stellung..." p. 544.

66.Ibid., p. 545.

67.For an in-depth discussion of Heuser's theories, see James Duncan Berry, pp. 75-98.

68.Georg Heuser, "Die Stabilrahmen, Strukturformen der Metall-Tektonik und ihre Nachbildung in Anderen Rohstoffe," ABZ 1884.49, p. 101.

69.In "Architektonische Zeitfragen," Richard Streiter criticized Heuser's belief that technique can found a style, and described as illusory Heuser's hope for a Gefachstyl of the future.

70.Georg Heuser, "Ein Nachwort zu den 'Stilbetrachtungen'," DBZ 23.1890, p. 627.

71.Heuser, "Die Stabilrahmen..." p. 98.

72.Georg Heuser, "Der Gefachstil, eine werdende Bauart," DBZ 24.1890, p. 568.

73.Georg Heuser, "Keime eines neuen Baustils," DBZ 22.1888, p. 530.

74.Heuser, "Die Stabilrahmen..." p. 98.

75. As Germany had become a major center for biological research (in the late 19th century), Darwinism became a popular ideology. As Alfred Kelly writes, "Darwinism became a pseudopolitical ideological weapon for the progressive segments of the middle class...By the 1880s, as liberalism weakened, Darwinism found a new expression among the working class as a popular Marxism in disguise." The Descent of Darwin: The Popularization of Darwinism in Germany, 1860-1914 (Chapel Hill: North Carolina, 1981), p. 5. Essentially, Darwinism corresponded to the German need for a non-political explanation for the forces of progress. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
76. Heuser, "Keime eines neuen Baustils," p. 529.
77. Georg Heuser, "Darwinistisches über Kunst und Technik," ABZ 55.1890, p. 18.
78. Heuser, "Der Gefachstil..." p. 566.
79. Ernst Kapp, Grundlinien einer Philosophie der Technik: zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Cultur aus neuer Gesichtspunkten (Braunschweig: George Westermann, 1877), p. 41.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
81. Heuser, "Darwinistisches über Kunst und Technik," p. 26.
82. Leopold Bauer, "Die alte und neue Richtung in der Baukunst," Der Architekt 4.1898, p. 32.
83. Cornelius Gurlitt, Die deutsche Kunst des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, ihre Ziele und Täten (Berlin: Georg Bondi, 1979), p. 466.
84. Otto Wagner, Moderne Architektur, trans. of 1902 version by Harry Francis Mallgrave (Getty: Santa Monica, California, 1988), p. 74.
85. *Ibid.*, p. 91.
86. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
87. Streiter, p. 74.
88. *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.
89. See Joseph August Lux, Ingenieur-Aesthetik (München: Gustav Lammers, 1910).
90. Joseph August Lux, Die moderne Wohnung und ihre Ausstattung (Wien: Wiener, 1905), p. 13.
91. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
92. Gurlitt, Zur Befreiung der Baukunst, p. 23.
93. Gruner, "Die Lüge in der Baukunst," ABZ 53.1888, p. 86.
94. Gruner cites two main directions for symbolizing architectural forms, and indicates throughout his article a preference for the latter: 1) Semperian- in which the *bauwerk* is a structure from wood, stone and iron, whose surface the architect has clothed as tastefully as possible, so that the actual building material is forgotten and only the language of the symbol is allowed to speak; 2) a second trend

(sounding like Bötticher)- in which the exterior appearance is of substance, and its essence must harmonize given materials, construction and Kunstform.

95.Gruner, p. 95.

96.Streiter, p. 85.

97.Ibid., p. 100.

98.Ibid., p. 94.

99.Ibid., p. 95.

100.Ibid., p. 132.

101.Ibid., p. 105.

102.Fritsch, "Stil-Betrachtungen," p. 431.

103.Neumann, Architektonische Betrachtungen, p. 300.

104.Heinrich Pudor, "Zur Ästhetik der Eisenarchitektur," Der Architekt 8.1902, p. 2.

105.This clearly coincides, as we will see in Chapter Seven, with the rising popularity of psychology in both Austria and Germany.

106.L. Trzeschtik, "Die Moderne Architektur," ABZ 54.1889, p. 38.

107.L. Trzeschtik, "Die Architektur und ihr Verhältniss zur Malerei, Plastik und Gartenkunst," ABZ 53.1888, pp. 12-13.

108.L. Trzeschtik, "Die Prinzipien der Baukunst: nach Idealität und Theorie einerseits, nach realistischen Praxis anderseits," ABZ 51.1891, p. 6. Even realism, however, is intended for idealization in Trzeschtik's philosophy of architecture, and in this direction he writes: "Das Reale in der Baukunst sind der Raum, das Spiel der Lasten und Kräfte, die ur organischen Stoffe quantitativ und qualitativ, deren sie zur Darstellung bedarf, und welche sie durchgeistigen und idealisieren soll..." Ibid., p. 22.

109.J. Prestel, "Realismus und Architektur," Der Architekt 6.1900, p. 32.

110.Ibid., p. 32.

111.J. Prestel, "Neue Motive der Architektur," Der Architekt 7.1901, p. 46.

112.Ibid., p. 45.

113.Cornelius Gurlitt, "Die Theorien der Baukunst im XIX. Jahrhundert," Der Bautechniker XXIV, No. 8, p. 176.

114.Karl Henrici, "Ueber die Wahrheit in der Architektur," in Abhandlungen, p. 159.

115.For that matter, it is not necessary to represent on the exterior the internal arrangement of functions. Ibid., p. 168.

116.Henrici, "Ueber die Wahrheit in der Architektur," p. 169.

117.Henrici, "Von Innen nach Aussen oder von Aussen nach Innen?" p. 178.

118.Ibid., p. 191.

119.Gustav Ebe, Architektonische Raumlehre, Entwicklung der Typen des Innenbaues (Dresden: Gerhard Kühtmann, 1900), p. 1.

120.Ibid., p. 3.

PART III

Desperation growing endlessly,
Life is nothing more to me,
Checked in the depth of the throat,
Than a rock of outcries.

Giuseppe Ungaretti¹

CHAPTER 6

FALLING OUT WITH THE *MODERNE*

The generation of 1900 struggled to transcend divisiveness and reconstitute an explicable visual order for architecture and the practical arts upon firm explanatory foundations. Despite all the effort to provide normative explanations for continuity and stability in the culture of the practical arts during the nineteenth century, the gap between an acceptable paradigm of knowledge and speculation widened as the century ended. In addition, the opposition between the practical arts and the fine arts intensified. As was apparent in the previous chapter, the philosophical positions of idealism and realism were also increasingly divided. The point of contact between painting and furniture-making, between sculpture and architecture, lost its intrinsic appeal. Finally, the mercurial association of the terms within the concept "practical arts" compelled a confrontation between artistic freedom and utilitarian necessity.

Two trends dominated discourse on the state of fragmentation in the practical arts. They can be characterized as unity or separation. Unity, to begin with, results from an attempt to transform all human action into an analogue of natural creativity. An organic unity of nature becomes the inevitable correlative of an envisaged wholeness for the dependent and independent aspects of the practical arts. Much of the thrust of the theoretical movements of the twentieth century made unity of art and need their highest command. Within German-speaking Europe the new unified style of the turn of the century was known as *Jugendstil*.² In Austria, it was frequently called the *Moderne*.³ Among its greatest exemplars were the *Secession* artists organized in Vienna and Munich, and the Artists' Colony exhibition in Darmstadt.⁴ Announced in journals such as Der Architekt (1895), Pan (1895), Jugend (1896), and Ver Sacrum (1897), the new movement

was characterized by an attempt to cement in a unified style the century-long calls for a thorough interaction between the fine and applied arts.

By contrast, the urge to separation observed a difference between individual and collective inventiveness. For Adolf Loos, the meaning of architecture could not be grasped within a conception unifying these two realms. Unity was a destructive illusion that must be dissipated. The question is no longer: How do we discover the underlying coherence between the two roles of the practical arts? But rather: How can the pernicious notion of unity be eradicated to uncover logically distinct roles for the languages of art and craft?

The debate on unity and separation within architectural culture at the turn of the century is extremely significant in understanding the reactions of Adolf Loos and other writers to the theoretical programs of the *Moderne*. The desire to prove the existence of unified or separate languages within the practical arts found it necessary to understand fundamental aspects of creation. Hence, explanations given for both sides of the issue bring to light a host of doctrines and supposedly complete explanations. Historiography of the Modern Movement in architecture would have us believe that the discursive environment was much simpler, that these doctrines were consistent and part of a progressive development of thought. To take a famous example, Otto Wagner's famous aphorism, *Artis sola domina necessitas*, has been frequently read as the triumphant manifestation of a new age. As a modernist doctrine, it signified the victory of function over aesthetics, of realistic thinking over sentimental longing.⁵ But, like other such manifestos, the aphorism acquired its might and mastery over time and in reflection. In its own age, Wagner's short statement was controversial, and as we have seen in the previous chapter, construed more a challenge for debate on the merits of the real or ideal than a summation of agreed-upon principles.

Where discursive momentum changed course was in its increasing alienation from historicism. The previous stylistic debate, as we saw in Chapter Two, had revolved around

a belief in the necessity of recognizing the historical motivations which underlie a building style for the present. Adherents of both unity and separation at the turn of the century placed much reduced emphasis on historical precedent.⁶ Due to discursive exhaustion with historicist explanations, motivations to understand artistic creations within a progressive time-scale were widely dropped, and with them also the extension of history as coincident with that of the arts.

Of course, the idea of "designing for one's own time" sanctioned history inasmuch as it attempted to situate the present age in a discrete temporal realm. But, the contrasts between the earlier historicizing direction and later scientific course became sharp toward the turn of the century. In 1887, the historicist school, as epitomized by the Schleswig architect Johannes Otzen, professor at the Technische Hochschule in Berlin, had stressed the importance of understanding the correct artistic sensitivity through investigating historical styles.⁷ Yet, by 1901, this historic crusade had for many, including Otzen, played itself out. Otzen now condemned the mixture of styles as dangerous for architecture, and recommended a release from the historic formalism of the last decade. While still recommending a proximity with traditions, Otzen placed equal emphasis upon what he saw as the requisite mixture in architecture of the beautiful and functional.⁸ Likewise, in 1901, Franz Drobny labeled imitation of historical styles as a technique lacking soul. Austria, and Vienna in particular, were singled out as lying in the camp of the antiquarians. As far as Drobny could see, art during the nineteenth century lacked substance: *"Ihre Nachahmungen waren blosse Schattenbilder vergangener Herrlichkeit, alte Formen ohne den alten Inhalt. Alle diese Symbole waren todt."*⁹ What he proposed in place of what seemed an increasingly senseless imitation of traditional decoration were new works of architecture and applied art in harmony with modern feelings and needs.

Turn-of-the-century theorists found the raw material for constituting their ideas on unity and separation among dissimilar ideologies. A single, systematic explanation for

either position did not exist, as natural laws, subjective imagination, and cultural criticism formed the basis for different investigations into the meaning of the practical arts. For the theorists of the *Moderne*, to a large degree, the question for the role of art within architecture at the turn of the century became one of whether form follows the objective (or scientific) laws of nature, or the subjective and personal dictates of an artist. This philosophical variation in promoting a unified style meant, however, that the study of the external variations of nature and the internal workings of the artistic mind were rarely separate from one another. Taken together, the dual orientations interwove a cognitive structure whose discursive utterances made rapid turns between subjectivity and objectivity.

Loos's position can be better approximated by the idea of cultural criticism. He believed that each creative act is articulated in a complex cultural space. Whereas neither given realities nor mental images alone can provide a correct account of the meaning of this space, ideas governing culture flow from both sources. Thus, Loos's denial of the unity advocated by these trends within the *Moderne* does not constitute his position as their bipolar opposite. Clearly, the sufficient epistemological conditions for dividing culture into its logical realms must recognize that explanation lies in many intermediate positions.

Metaphors of Mind and Spirit

In the 1890s, the transmutation of traditional values into supposedly modern attributes was strongly influenced by the resurfacing of the romantic idea of the subjective artist. As we have just described, subjective idealization became a catch word for this new poetic language of the artist architect. Now, as it appeared to many, the inner workings of the artistic mind would constitute the explanation for the unity desired between free and necessary values in the practical arts. As we have seen in the texts of Gurlitt, Henrici, and Ebe in the previous chapter, a position between the reality of objective conditions and the

ideality of spiritual demands was sought in the idea of the artistic imagination. Among theorists of the *Moderne*, this idea was developed much further, and is well illustrated by the ideological development of Ferdinand Feldegg, editor of the new Viennese architectural journal Der Architekt, between 1895 and 1900.

In 1895, Ferdinand Feldegg introduced the inaugural issue of his journal with a declaration of a second Austrian Renaissance. Of necessity, to help account for this occurrence, Feldegg was compelled to contrast what ultimately became known as the *Moderne* with the first great artistic flowering of the Austrian capital. This announcement heralded the advent of a unified modern style whose logic of action was comparable to the profound establishment of architectural order 200 years earlier in Vienna. As would be the case with other definitions of the new style of the twentieth century in Austria and Germany, the choice of metaphors would in large part differentiate the claims for meaning.

Feldegg described Vienna's first Renaissance, two centuries earlier,¹⁰ as product of the rise of the monarchical Hapsburg state, colored especially by the great building boom in palace, monastery and church construction that followed the final suffocation of the Turkish threat after 1683. What most impressed him about the architectural accomplishments of this initial Viennese Renaissance was the creation of great buildings by Baroque masters such as J.B. Fischer von Erlach and Lucas von Hildebrandt which stamped an aura of monumentality on the city which has lasted to this day. Whereas Feldegg considered the first Renaissance to be altogether the product of the inner impulses of great artists working for the court, he was aware that the external needs of the populous middle- and working-classes must strongly determine the architectural character of the modern metropolis. In casting aspirations for a second Renaissance as an expression of industrial civilization, Feldegg worried about maintaining sufficiently high artistic aspirations. Preoccupied with a threat of dry utilitarianism lacking artistic verve, he warned that the Second Renaissance should not come down as "*die Ära des Verkehrs- und*

Eisenbahnstils, der kunstlosen Nützlichkeit genannt werden würde."¹¹ For Feldegg, the responsibility of the new journal would be to prevent the loss of the big artistic picture because of a preoccupation with little details. His choice of the Renaissance metaphor implied a definition of the new *Moderne* on the basis of individual artistic attributes viewed quintessential to the first Renaissance.

In an article a few years later for another new journal, Die Architektur des XX. Jahrhunderts: Zeitschrift für moderne Baukunst, Feldegg was more far-reaching in his stratagems. In spite of Austria's strong tradition of Renaissance and Baroque design during the latter decades of the nineteenth century, he seemed utterly unregretful about the abandonment of these enduring principles by what he saw as the modern style. In this vein, Feldegg characterized Viennese design of the late 1890s (the *Moderne*) as an antithesis of what had come before it: "*Erruptiv, fast revolutionär setzte die neue Zeit, die neue Generation ein.*"¹² Bold, disdainful of all hitherto accepted dogma, the new era was seen by the editor of Der Architekt as one of novelty at any price. And, although it professed to follow what is described as the coarse materialism of Otto Wagner's Moderne Architektur, design of the turn-of-the-century soon became, according to Feldegg, super-idealistic, mystical and romantic.

The broad arch of mystic dialect spread, Feldegg wrote, from Hermann Bahr to Ludwig Hevesi, and its ideas meant the: "*Lossagung nicht nur von aller Convention, sondern auch von allem, was dem schlichten Verstande bisher geläufig gewesen.*"¹³ The archetypal characteristic of this new manner of design was subjectivism. Reading the Enlightenment mindset as the privileging of the victory of the individual, Feldegg looked to the philosophical tradition of Kant, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, and found that modern art must deliver to the world inner thoughts, and subjective values. "*Die moderne Baukunst schöpft bewusster aus der inneren, der individuellen Quelle, als die ihr*

vorausgeganene historische Richtung gethan."¹⁴ Modern art, consequently, must be the product of our inner spirits, our personal, artistic way of seeing.

At the core of the critical project of Feldegg and other theorists to be discussed (Hermann Bahr, Hermann Obrist) was a belief that only subjective, artistic energy could surmount what seemed otherwise to be historical inevitability. In this manner of speaking, the crisis of the styles could only be overcome by the artistic will. Architectural creation, in these strongly idealist terms, began to resemble Arthur Schopenhauer's idea of the objectification of the subjective will. Since we have nothing but will, wrote Schopenhauer, the willing in general of the will is a matter of course. It entails the absence of all aim, of all limits, and belongs to the essential nature of the will in itself, which is endless striving.¹⁵ Later, Friedrich Nietzsche, in his parallel of Apollonian and Dionysian knowledge, painted an even more vivid portrait of the ecstatic artist. For these Dionysian artists, "each of his gestures betokens enchantment; through him sounds a supernatural power, the same power which makes the animals speak and the earth render up milk and honey."¹⁶ Finally, these philosophical constructions of the self-fashioning artist were also strengthened by the revolutionary developments in artistic representation taking place in late nineteenth century France. There, the manifold depiction of subjective sensation created a vast pool of artistic depth of which German theorists became increasingly envious.

The enshrinement of artistic striving was the focus of Hermann Bahr's texts written between 1891 and 1900. Bahr, an active writer on the arts in Vienna, founded the weekly paper Die Zeit. To read Bahr on the state of modern art is to experience the struggle of the critic against the inveterate fabric of false society. Bahr's writings address themselves to the need for art to liberate itself from these strictures. In his chief text on the principles of the Viennese breakaway art movement, Secession (1900), Bahr stated the question at hand: should Viennese painters remain businessmen or become true artists?

Labelling the traditional Viennese showcase for art, the *Künstlerhaus*, a marketplace and bazaar, Bahr placed the struggle of the association of young artists as one of breaking out of this stranglehold and realizing the infinitely higher aims of art.

Bahr began with the idea that whatever an artist creates, it should not be thought of as a style. Otherwise, the interests of business triumph, and fashion lurks near.

Es wird Mode werden, Secessionistisch zu thun und die Linien, die stilisierte Blumen, die man aus dem Ver Sacrum kennt, die ganze Schrift unserer jungen Künstler ungefähr zu copieren. Aus ihrem Wesen wird eine Manier werden...Hoffentlich lassen sich die Künstler nicht irre machen, bleiben treu und trachten mit Strenge, ihre Gedanken immer reiner auszudrücken.¹⁷

There can therefore be no Secessionist style. The problem of style can only be treated in relation to what Bahr called the acceptance of true artistic understanding.

Earlier, in Die Überwindung des Naturalismus (1891), Bahr laid the groundwork for these thoughts. Here he called for the artist to reject the status of being the tool of reality. The notion of objective reality, after all, is a sham, an invention of reason. Efforts to achieve realism in art through naturalistic portrayal are absurd. Defined in opposition to artistic freedom, naturalism (as the unartistic vision of reality) represents the apotheosis of false hopes. While it expresses a vision of nature, what really flourishes is cold reason. Instead, Bahr believed artists must rationalize nature. Reality should become the tool of the artist, who then announces his own unique inner nature in clear and effective symbols. "*Der Unkünstler lebt im täglichen Schein der Dinge...Der Künstler lebt im ewigen Sinne der Dinge; er nimmt sie symbolisch, die Welt wird ihm ein Atlas seiner Seele.*"¹⁸

It was apparent to Bahr that the prevailing superficial perception of nature will disappear as man enters into the temple of his own dreams, as naturalism will be overcome by a *Mystik der Nerven* which frees up the spirit of art in man. "*Wenn erst das Nervöse völlig entbunden und der Mensch, aber besonders der Künstler, ganz an die Nerven hingegeben sein wird, ohne vernünftige und sinnliche Rücksicht, dann kehrt die verlorene Freude in die Kunst zurück.*"¹⁹ Bahr's artist, who understands that only art can rescue

man from his lowly predicament, resembled greatly Nietzsche's Dionysian man. Turning inward, Bahr foresaw reflection on one's own *Seelenzustände*. For him, the modern spirit is psychological, and artists must search for those secrets which slumber in the depths of the human consciousness.²⁰ These require lyrical expression:

Wir wollen wahr werden. Wir wollen gehorchen dem äußeren Gebote und der inneren Sehnsucht. Wir wollen werden, was unsere Umwelt geworden. Wir wollen die faule Vergangenheit von uns abschütteln, die, lange verblüht, unsere Seele in fahlem Laube erstickt. Gegenwart wollen wir sein...Ja, nur den Sinnen wollen wir uns vertrauen, was sie verkündigen und befehlen. Sie sind die Boten von draußen, wo in der Wahrheit das Glück ist."²¹

Given the personal character of the psyche, there can be no objective idea of style, but rather, only values which reflect individual artistic temperaments. Style should express a person's practical and sentimental needs, "*so daß ihr verborgenes Seelisches öffentliche Verkörperung gewinnt.*"²²

Similarly, in Renaissance, Neue Studien zur Kritik der Moderne (1897) Bahr declared that naturalism is no longer effective today. Art should not mimic nature, but should create anew. Today, it is important to have a soul or essence so strong that it rings forth in every action. "*So einen eigenen Ton zu haben, das ist alles. Wer seinen eigenen Ton hat, den wird man einen Künstler nennen dürfen.*"²³ It was essential for Bahr that this *eigenen Ton* ring true for architecture. Buildings which do not reflect their *eigenen Ton* lie. Like Loos, Bahr considered the Vienna Ring as "a truly cheap carnival" where all buildings are required to wear a mask. From this point of view, the houses of the *Ringstraße* are lies and unnatural, deceptions of the sense of building.

By contrast, the house of the *Biedermeier* age is true because its form corresponds to its content.²⁴ Instead of copying historical styles, architecture must be uncostumed. This does not imply, however, an unornamented style like that of Loos. What Bahr meant, rather, is that the essence of a building must be truthfully expressed. In the place of false ornament, which hides the built essence, Bahr wanted an artistic working of flat surfaces

(much like Joseph Olbrich's Secession building) to vitalize the spaces inside. As for architecture, Bahr wanted to endow a house with a total harmony of existence, shaped by the hand of the artist. Openly attributing these ideas to Morris and Van de Velde, he described how an artist shapes the world:

Der Künstler sollte nicht mehr bloß ein Bild malen, sondern ein ganzes Zimmer schaffen, ja eine ganze Wohnung...Hier lernten die Leute fühlen, dass ein Zimmer kein Museum ist, sondern etwas Seelisches äußern soll; jedes Ding in einem Zimmer muss wie ein Instrument in einem Orchester sein, der Architect ist der Dirigent, das Ganze soll eine Symphonie geben."²⁵

Bahr also dutifully noted that architecture is pre-eminently an art of use, and realized that the language of the house must also conform to the life of the occupant. It is a given that design should express the idea of living, and proceed from the interior to the facade.²⁶ But, Bahr certainly didn't want an unartistic product. The facade should express internal living, be true to the essence of the house, but also be beautiful. Practicality should not get in the way of decoration.

Hermann Obrist was also active in theoretical matters around the year 1900.²⁷ The Swiss-born Obrist, a founding member of the Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk (1897) in Munich, was also worried about contemporary artistic conditions, and excited by the possibilities which modern production offered art. Obrist, unlike Bahr, was also an artist who generated quite unconventional forms. Like many others, Obrist grasped the threat of misplaced historical ornament, and recognized the importance of taking into account both practical needs and spiritual essences. Again, like earlier theorists in Austria and Germany, Obrist echoed the much-repeated problems of contemporary *Kunstgewerbe*: "*wohin man blickt, Überfülle, aber das einzelne zu oft kleinlich, banal, Fabrikware, und bis zur Grenze der Möglichkeit mit Ornament bedeckt.*"²⁸ For Obrist, ornament should not be bizarre or solely curious, but should be simple and of reasonable cost.²⁹

But what linked Obrist to Bahr and the subjectivist movement in the arts, was his unwavering belief in the personal power of the artist, and the urgency for art to express this subjectivity. The fundamental point of Obrist's critique of both the applied arts and architecture is that art must express the spiritual life and intensity of the artist, his cravings and striving. In fact, the expression of the feelings of the artist is precisely the measure of artistic worth. The same holds true for the feelings of the observers. As Obrist commented: "*Die Wertigkeit eines Kunstwerkes hängt von der Wertigkeit der Empfindungen ab, die es auslöst.*"⁴⁰ The artistic differences between buildings lies in whether they satisfy "*unsere Raumgefühle, unsern Sinn für Übersichtlichkeit, für Verhältnisse, für behagliche, wohnliche Raumverteilung, für Schmückung und so weiter...*"⁴¹

In the essay "Die Zukunft unserer Architektur" (1900) Obrist extended his subjectivism to relativize the notion of style and artistic production within a culture. Essentially, the very existence of an extra-subjective class such as a style is ruled out. Obrist believed that styles are not historical, or quasi-mystical necessities which narrowly correspond to a given age. By contrast, historical styles are variations of artistic consciousness, almost accidental occurrences. The Renaissance, asserted Olbrich, to take a potent example, "*ist aber keine historisches oder völkische Notwendigkeit gewesen, sondern er ist gleich am Anfange von ganz wenigen Leuten in die Welt gesetzt worden.*"⁴² Thus, one cannot claim that this style is the spontaneous expression of Italian *Volksseele*. Rather, much in the same manner of thinking as Feldegg, the Renaissance was created by several geniuses; two or three men as Obrist puts it. Styles, to put it simply, are in all cases created by people as fallible as ourselves.

Das, was jene Bauperiode zum Teil so ergreifend macht, ist nur derselbe Geist der Energie, der Wucht, der Majestät, den wir auch in dem übrigen politischen Leben der Zeit finden, also Züge, die man fast als ethische bezeichnen möchte, nicht aber als schöpferisch neue Formgebung.⁴³

Because of the inherent, if unrealized facility of an artist to stamp his time, Obrist envisioned great possibilities for the new century. To summon up a new artist-driven age,

he advised that we should create as earlier masters did: unconscious, true, simple, and as naturally as it comes without distractions.³⁴

This view was shared by Leo Nacht, who demanded in "Von der Persönlichkeit des Architektur" (1900) that architecture take its place among the arts and recognize (as they all do) the subjective element of the artist. Commenting that the work of architecture grows with its artist and is indivisible from him, Nacht encouraged architecture's emancipation from engineering concerns: "*Je mehr sich der Architekt von der niederdrückenden Wucht statischer Gesetze befreien kann, desto subjektiver wird er schaffen können, desto freier wird seine Persönlichkeit aus dem Rahmen der Kunstgeschichte herauszutreten.*"³⁵ Nacht renounced the use of old styles, as they were inseparable from the spirit of their times, and hence incompatible with the peculiar *Volksempfindung* of modern architects.

Of paramount importance, Obrist wanted to lead us away from the idea of style in so far as it makes demands which are unrealistic. As has been clear in most discussions on style, theorists have envisioned artistic production as projected within a grander plan. For Obrist, the reverse is true. Here, the artist should focus on the naturalness of creating. Again, what Obrist wanted from an art work was an intrinsically subjective product exemplifying the power of personification, where its artist's personality is visible on its functional side. Free movement of the artistic consciousness is indispensable, "*die einfache kindliche, freudige und vor allem unbewusste Kühnheit von Künstlernaturen.*"³⁶ The artist should draw as if he could do nothing else. There should not be one architectural style of the future, but many, "*ebensoviele wie es ausgeprägte Persönlichkeiten geben wird.*" For Obrist, there is no progress in art other than the expanding of possibilities.

Obrist's referral to the importance of new possibilities harbored his belief in the ability of the arts to lead us out of our tragic middle class existence, and make life less laborious. "*Früher hieß es doch immer, die Kunst solle unser Leben verschönern, bereichern,*

*vertiefen, erklären und uns hinausheben aus dem bürgerlichen Alltag.*³⁷ A restrictive notion of function therefore is as inhibiting for the production of the applied arts as a reliance on stylistic parameters. True, like Van de Velde, he argued for the decoration and enlivenment of that which is functional.³⁸ Yet, Obrist also placed limits on our attachment to this idea. Binding artistic adherence to function according to existing ways can do no good for the human condition. Yet, this has always been the primary purpose of art:

Die bildende Kunst (architecture, applied arts, sculpture, painting) ist berufen das Leben und den Geist in der Natur uns schärfer und klarer zu zeigen, als wir sie im gewohnten bürgerlichen Leben zu sehen vermögen. Sie hat alles, was der Menschen Seele an Freude, Leid, und Qual und Schmerz kennt, alles was sie an Schönheit für das kommende Menschengeschlecht hofft.³⁹

Obrist's idea of the primordial importance of the artistic imagination to free mankind was reinforced by his expansive belief in new sources, and expansion beyond merely utilitarian questions. In a dramatic shift of words, given his disavowal of objective knowledge, his metaphors for artistic creation even led him to science. In this regard, he asked why artists could not benefit from the obvious means of scientific creativity, which is "*ein Weg, der dort durch die wunderbare Mischung von Wissen, Erkenntnistheorie und Spekulation, von Vorsicht und Energie, von praktischer Anschauung und freier Erfindungsgabe.*"⁴⁰

Metaphors of Natural Order

This essentially irrational definition of scientific activity was shared neither by scientists of the time nor by all modern theorists of the arts; those grouped under the varied headings of the *Moderne*. The subjectivist theories described above do not pass inexorably as the wellsprings of the Central European *Moderne*, since this movement was also significantly colored by a belief in naturalism and objectivism, concepts seemingly fully at odds with some earlier descriptions by Bahr and Obrist. Despite widespread belief at the time in the coming of a new Renaissance or modern style, and a later historical

representation of the period as the *Jugendstil*, the profusion of texts diverged as much as they converged.

One different orientation started from nature. The idea of nature as metaphor implied a belief in the similarity between organic processes and practical arts production. Here, unlike the framework of internal mental representations, an ideology for the practical arts was developed through analogy with the timeless, and utterly objective mechanisms of the natural world. The natural metaphor inspired the abandonment of both historical observation and the subjectivism of the artistic mind in favor of the direct observation of nature. This notion, as we have seen, is closely related to the rise of scientific empiricism during the nineteenth century. We have discussed that the postulation of the natural world as a model for the practical arts originated in the Arts and Crafts movement in England as well as the *Kunstgewerbe* discourse in Austria and Germany. Furthermore, the realist direction within architectural theory, those explanations of architectural meaning in reference to a network of observable operations in the physical world, is an important criterion in understanding the rise of the organic metaphor in design.

In 1889, Georg Bötticher's plea for a new artistic direction was based upon the premise that the stylistic debate is inescapable so long as we study old models before nature.⁴¹ Students, he wrote, can never become innovative through studying the old stylistic art forms. This can only come about when they cultivate their own, naive, original vision.⁴² Georg Bötticher recommended that students study natural forms in regard to their use as decorative matter: "*die Naturformen gleich auf ihre Verwendbarkeit als Verzierungsmotive zu betrachten und nicht im Gegensatz zu den Ornamentformen zu sehen.*"⁴³ Only in this way can we develop a modern style.⁴⁴ What is sought by such a conception of art is the replacement of the dispersed and disappointing languages of modern society by the internal logic of artistic representation. Art must remain pure

because society is polluted. Art must have a culture of its own, so that it can then substitute this ideal world for the debased anachronisms that parade as culture.

The shift of the ontological definition of the aesthetic in design to the objective sphere of tectonic appearance has as well much of its theoretical basis in Henry van de Velde's texts. The Belgian-born architect and artist began designing houses in Belgium and France in the *Art Nouveau* style in 1895. In 1900, van de Velde moved to Germany, where he became active in the theory and design of architecture and the applied arts, becoming director of the Arts and Crafts School in Weimar in 1908. Van de Velde's theoretical endeavors, which took place predominantly in Central Europe, were predicated upon a longing for a new harmony between art and the conditions of modern life, and an aesthetic clarification of the products of that collaboration. But, unlike Obrist, van de Velde professed allegiance to a rational art based on logical construction. The puritanical commandments of his aesthetic rationalism banned all symbolism and imagination drawn from memory or history, and sought an art of factual and logical necessity.⁴⁵

Based on the wisdom of machine efficiency, van de Velde presumed a realistic representation of forms and colors in architecture and the practical arts. Against the background of material processes, he argued that such a realism and naturalism mean a rediscovery of life for the artist. They signify a beauty that possesses eternal truth. And they disavow, above all else, the arbitrariness of the imagination. It is on the basis of this notion of objectivity, furthermore, that design breaks off its old kinship with history. Van de Velde, like other theorists of modern design at the turn of the century, prophesied the new by forcefully dissolving the old, which he equated with the historicism of contemporary architecture and urban design. Unlike the pure works of engineering, he described in un pitying terms the architecturally designed house as "*eine betrügerische Bilanz und wie ein Geldschrank, die Strasse ist die grenzlose Kloake, wo diese Geldspinde und diese nicht stimmenden Bilanzen sich aneinander reihen.*"⁴⁶

Bad design, we are told, is the visible display of cultural disorder and decadence. A low state of design also indicates a lack of spirit among urban dwellers. Modern society, it seemed, had lost its sense for lively and clear colors, powerful and strong forms, and rational construction. Like so many writers before him, van de Velde discovered this sense for artistic form-making only in the primitive. The primitive, as the necessary opposition to civilization, signified a state of harmony between man and nature.

Descent from the holistic values of the primitive therefore signifies the essential problem confronting the practical arts. At some point in history, European cultures accepted historicism and entered upon the unhealthy reflection on the past. Following the long series of attacks against historicism in Central Europe, van de Velde defined such reflection as unsuitable for modern life:

Aber wir waren überzeugt, dass, je länger die Praxis, überflüssige, aufgeklebte, unorganische Ornamente anzuwenden und diese Figurornamentik dauern würde, um so grösser die Wahrscheinlichkeit werde, dass wir unter diesem, immer mehr anschwellenden Berg nimmer unseren Verstand und die Daseinsberechtigung der Gegenstände, welche wir zu schaffen haben, herausfinden würden."⁴⁷

What is more, the reflective insights of historicism contradict what van de Velde saw as the new spirit of art brought to the continent by Ruskin, Morris and Crane in the 1860s and afterwards.⁴⁸ Our present understanding, wrote van de Velde, is totally indebted to the English rejection of false historical appearance.

Van de Velde's theoretical aims, however, were not wholly identical with those of what he termed the first, and English phase, of a renaissance in the applied arts. He envisioned his Continental-based movement, which he dated to the 1890s, as constituting a second phase of this renaissance. Unlike the English theorists who readily embraced the archaic conditions of pre-industrial culture, van de Velde wanted to transcend the primitive into an embrace of contemporary technology. The sound values of the primitive are translated into a theory of design for the future. It is hardly possible for van de Velde to conceive life in an industrial culture without adapting one's creative impulses to its new set

of drives. At issue therefore was the acceptance of industrial society and the ensuing transformation of the practical arts. Consequently, van de Velde's second phase of the renaissance in the practical arts embraced industrial production. He recognized that the industrialization of the practical arts is an ongoing process, and was far from complete. Of great significance therefore is the fact that the task for its completion lies in the hands of the practical artist. Generally speaking, it is the task of this artist to endow all remaining practical arts objects with the beautiful language of industrial forms. Closer relations between industry and many of the practical arts bear these thoughts out, and van de Velde wrote:

Die Industrie hat die Metallkonstruktion, ja sogar den Maschinenbau in den Bereich der Kunst gezogen. Sie hat kurzweg also den Ingenieur zum Künstler erhoben und das ganze Gebiet der Kunst um all das bereichert, was die Bezeichnung 'auf die Industrie angewandte Künste' mit Stolz umschliesst."⁴⁹

Yet, architecture was conspicuously absent from this list. There can be no completion of this natural process until architecture - seemingly against its will - joins what is termed by the Belgian theorist the "industrial arts of construction and ornament."

Where van de Velde's idea to industrialize architecture moved away from realist considerations of plan and structure was in his idea of the all-encompassing role for ornament. It is here, as we will see, that his theory became most repugnant to Loos. Starting from what he termed a Platonic conception of architectural beauty, which stressed the complete agreement of means and purpose, van de Velde developed a theory that everything outside of a purposive constructive conception of architecture is senseless. Where van de Velde departed from this admittedly questionable Platonic notion was in his concern for the decoration of purposeful forms. From the standpoint of a total view of art, he strove to impress that ornament is the wonderful and necessary decoration of life's products. It follows that those who live without ornament and art do not live fully, and cannot lead a creative life. They live cloistered, negating their natural destiny: "*Ein Leben*

*ohne Schmuck ist ebenso wenig wahres Leben, als das, welches man in Klöstern führt, in denen Männer oder Frauen in steter Negation ihrer natürlichen Bestimmung dahinleben.*⁵⁰

In van de Velde's view therefore, questions of construction and ornament are wholly interdependent. The importance of ornament to construction lies in the fact that decorative means must express those conditions of a space which the constructive system, because of its inflexibility, is incapable.⁵¹ The industrial structures of architecture must be raised through ornament to a more powerful symbolic language. Thus, to the constructive law of design van de Velde added consideration of the *Augenscheinlichkeit* of a building. Unquestionably, he was thinking of the spiritualization of human creations, and in the spirit of Riegl wrote: "*Die Augenscheinlichkeit besteht in der Bewertung aller einzelnen organischen Teile, aller Mittel und Ergänzungen, deren man bedarf, um ihrer Beihilfe und ihres Zusammenwirkens sicher zu sein.*"⁵²

In van de Velde's theory, each practical art has a common fundamental thought: to ornament purposive creation. The connection between ornament and construction is based on the fact that the former is bound up with the purposive *Bildungsweise* of new objects and buildings. For ornament only lives for its object, and is dependent wholly in its forms and lines on that object. "*Nichts ist berichtet, was nicht ein Organ bildet oder ein Bindeglied der verschiedenen Organe untereinander; kein Ornament darf Geltung finden, das nicht organisch sich anfügt.*"⁵³ The embrace of ornament and construction is complete, and they mutually define one another. Those rules which guide the work of the engineer will also guide that of the artist. The artist, properly engaged, creates ornament and construction in a harmonious act.

This concept of the additive nature of ornament may have been influenced by Heinrich Wölfflin's doctoral dissertation, "Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie der Architektur" (1886), where he described ornament as the expression of excessive *Formkraft*,

the will to create artistic forms inherent in human nature.⁵⁴ For Wölfflin, the opposition between materials and power of creating form is the tension which animates architectural creation. Putting into question Bötticher's clear differentiation of the constructive and decorative, Wölfflin suggested that their boundary is less easy to define. In examples drawn from Greek temples, he put forth the case that in more advanced cultures there is an abundance of *Formkraft* over *Stoff*. Anticipating his arguments for the painterly Baroque style,⁵⁵ Wölfflin wrote: "*In bezug auf Dekoration resultiert eine Kunst, die dem nachfühlenden Sinne nirgends mehr stille Flächen gewährt, sondern von jedem Muskel ein zuckendes Leben verlangt.*"⁵⁶

Likewise, van de Velde envisioned that ornament brings the sleeping masses of constructive form to life. Less historical than Wölfflin, the Belgian theorist suggested two key functions for ornament in architecture: first, it exists to the degree that it advocates, signifies and animates the constructive structure of a building; second, it has aesthetic merit of its own through a play of light and shadows and the pleasures of form. In both cases ornament is created out of the spatial requirements themselves, out of the intentions of the building following the means of construction. In both, as well, ornament must be non-representational.⁵⁷ It must bring to life the endless and changing spatial relations of architectural construction without calling undue attention to itself. To the new set of human needs embodied by a new architecture belongs a new ornament, different than that of antiquity or the Middle Ages.

The Rhetoric of the Line

We now approach van de Velde's theory that the creation of a modern ornament concerns itself with the scientific theory of lines and forms.⁵⁸ The key to good ornament lay in its ability to exemplify the constructive workings of art objects; the effective "*Gehirntätigkeit, die mit dem Blick das ganze Spiel des Organismus verfolgt.*"⁵⁹ In view of

the role of ornament as an enhancement of logical and elemental spatial relations, he understood lines as possessing the power to evoke primary reactions in the observer. Furthermore, linear ornament is an elemental power in that its energy works out of the eye's mechanisms. Lines move the eye in different directions, and have three general functions: to complement, repel and attract. In light of these optical relations, he wrote: *"Man muß nun alle Linien, aus denen später Formen entstehen, in solche Harmonie bringen, daß alle Wirkungen berechnet und neutralisiert werden."*⁶⁰

Belief in the primacy of visual lines extended beyond van de Velde's texts. For August Endell, an architect and arts and crafts designer in Munich, modern art and architecture must be both objective and creative; and the new ornament here again unfolds as a lineal force. Endell was convinced that the modernity of the practical arts is epitomized by the uniquely rapid tempo of our time, an age characterized by dramatic new developments: traffic, commercial life, electric illumination. Unlike van de Velde, however, who denounced artistic traditions, Endell regarded traditions as the surest route to modernist design. His hopes for originality in modern art were posed amidst the desperate need to regain and pass on artistic knowledge. Like many in the *Kunstgewerbe* discourse, it was clear to him that the false dualism of modernism and tradition concealed the actual collapse of tradition at the hands of historicism. As he described in "Originalität und Tradition" (1902), the demise of artistic traditions was the consequence of the continued imitation and trivialization of traditional artistic means and forms during the nineteenth century. Hence, it is imperative to reestablish ties with those artistic traditions virtually erased in the previous 100 years.

In this connection, Endell wrote that the only tradition left for the artist is that of creation. What is important to the artist or architect, as Endell had earlier described in "Möglichkeit und Ziele einer Neuen Architektur" (1897) is the exact determination of what is beautiful to the eye. He was therefore adamant that artists have no use for excessive

intellectualizing, and the use of idealistic, and vaguely philosophical concepts like simplicity, construction, and function. Although the concept of function had dominated recent discourse, Endell saw the results of the discussion as dry. Its furtherance would lead only to a description of the structure of a building. The much more important question to him of how one will fill it out depends upon other aesthetic factors.

Because of his faith in artistic traditions, industrial technology did not hold the same power for Endell as it did for van de Velde.⁶¹ Endell conceived his idea for the importance of traditions in the applied arts and architecture from those remaining strands still embodied in the hand crafts. Linking art to working with one's hands, Endell wrote: "*Kunst ist ausschliesslich Arbeit und setzt einzig und allein eine vollständige detaillierte Kenntnis der künstlerischen Wirkung voraus, sie verlangt unbedingte leidenschaftliche Hingebung und Ehrfurcht.*"⁶² All of this had been mentioned earlier in the *Kunstgewerbe* discourse, and as Endell discussed it in "Originalität und Tradition," the notion of artistic creation involved linking contemporary artistic activity with its technical roots in the hand crafts. Once art and work are so coupled, today's artists would be able to understand the specific traditions indispensable to their trade.

In this sense, Endell recognized that we must reconstruct a set of customary rules and laws, "*eine sichere Schulung des Auges für Formen- und Farbenwirkung.*"⁶³ This includes systematic knowledge of form and color, and the creation of beautiful objects through the correct application of this knowledge. Endell's texts thus represent a conjunction between subjective theories of the artist and objective theories based upon the laws of materials and things. As demonstrated most dramatically in his design for the photography workshop Elvira (1897) in Munich, Endell, who studied under Theodor Lipps at Tübingen and also worked alongside Obrist, was especially influenced by Lipps's theory of empathy. Lipps's idea was that artistic feeling is the result of a mingling of the self with the other. This mingling is dependent upon duplication of qualities of the subject in the

object. Empathy with the outside world, as basis for artistic beauty, is self-referential. Aesthetic empathy is the inner recognition through the sense organs of the forms of an other: "*Einfühlung also ist Bedingung der Freude an dem in der wahrgenommenen Ausdrucksbewegung liegenden inneren Verhalten eines Anderen.*"⁶⁴ Thus, at the heart of the notion of empathy is the exteriorization of the individual and the interiorization of the object, a directed merger of the optic perceptive process with the shapes of physical objects.

Therefore as important to Endell as the objective, tactile knowledge of shaping form is the artistic awareness gained by perception of the outside world by the inner self. Perceiving beauty is a matter of training one's eyes to see extremely carefully, the development of *Formgefühl*. The architect, wrote Endell, must be a *Formkünstler*, the creator of works that immediately affect our senses, much like the tones of music.⁶⁵ Because of the emphatic relationship each form, and there are many, excites a different feeling in the eyes of the observer. Here again, the movement of lines, to take one of Endell's most cogent examples, have a strong impact on our senses. Our knowledge of the lawful working of lines on the senses can lead to great aesthetic consequence. As Endell expressed it:

Wir brauchen vielmehr klare, nüchterne Antwort auf die Fragen, die Arbeit uns bringt. Wie macht man eine Linie hart, wie macht sie weich, ruhig, vornehm, glatt, elegant, wie lässt man ein Ornament leichter erscheinen oder wie macht man es schwer."⁶⁶

For Endell, in architecture the beauty of a building is strongly dependent upon the movement created by lines.

Aesthetic feelings are dependent upon the morphological qualities of the lines, and each type of line (whether straight or curved) leads to a certain feeling in the observer: horizontal- steady power; falling vertical- light and effortless; rising vertical- sharp exertion. For example, the straight line appears swifter the narrower it is, slower the wider it is.⁶⁷ As well, straight lines give the greatest impression of speed when they are narrow and long. On a house, for instance, repetition of horizontals is tolerable, because of

their calming character. Repetition of ascending verticals, on the other hand, is disturbing, due to the difficulty of jagged eye movement amidst constant crescendos. Additionally, architects express the different character of rooms through manipulation of spatial relations, illumination and fenestration. Using the same form too often leads to boredom, while too sharp contrasts damage beauty. Changing window shapes, placement and orientation results in thoroughly different impressions. As well, ornament is extremely important to the architect, allowing the building greater possibilities of beauty:

die Möglichkeit den Grundcharakter durch eine Reihe von Nüancen zu beleben, aber es setzt ihn auch in den Stand, Härten zu beseitigen und auf kleineren Flächen Wirkungen zu erzielen, die ohne Ornament nur mit grosser Raumverschwendung möglich sind."⁶⁸

A more naturalistic probing of the question of the attraction and power of ornamental line, constituting an aesthetic of forms for modern art, is the project of Franz Geiger in the essay, "Die moderne Formensprache" (1902). For Geiger, art does not exist in isolation from other forms of knowledge. In fact, the artistic life of a nation is cut on the pattern of scientific and technical knowledge. Today, man has a completely different understanding of nature than in antiquity or the Middle Ages, and this understanding is made most self-evident in science and technology. The steady expansion of scientific and technical knowledge has led to an enormous expansion of physical knowledge. New areas of understanding have been created, such as "*speziell Energie-betrachtungen, das Verhalten von Kraftströmes, Kraftverteilung im Felde...*"⁶⁹ To satisfy the exacting demands of these fields, it is Geiger's contention that modern art must adopt striking new forms.

As Geiger understood artistic representation, it is always a simplification and schematization of the more complex events occurring in nature. Nature's events are in dynamic motion. Nonetheless, while much of nature's power is visible to us, its inner workings are not easily encountered. Likewise, the creation of cultural works (buildings, tools, furniture) by mankind with nature's materials and by consent of her forces creates a sediment into whose internal forces we cannot see. It is this conception of nature and

nature's products that makes Geiger's concepts of art explicit, as it is the purpose of art to represent these unseen forces. In the realm of design, more specifically, art must lay bare, or bring out the internal, natural forces invisible in new human constructions. Far from being superfluous to structure, ornamental art is the symbolization of structure. Art, and especially architecture, writes Geiger, is "*das getreue Abbild der damals herrschenden physikalischen Anschauungen.*"⁷⁰

Representation must be objective for Geiger as it was for van de Velde, and strong expressions in the decorative arts must be of a dynamic nature. The personal element in design must keep itself to the boundaries of the constructive environs. Unlike for van de Velde, however, Geiger chose to stress that the ornamental enhancement of architecture can be approached as the representation on the constructive surface of invisible dynamic events occurring beneath the surface of the building. He noted that beneath constructive forms exists a plurality of energy flows. This latter concept concerns the internal flow of forces of energy currents within any given structure; for instance, the movement of compressive or tensile forces along the walls and columns of a building. Thus, for Geiger, all questions about the appearance of ornamental lines on a building surface arise purely from thoughts on the temper of the energy flows beneath that surface. The task of the artist is to show how a building functions, the representation through ornament of the movement of stresses invisible to the external viewer.

As Geiger portrayed it, the modern development of the ornamental line emerged out of the desire to represent these striving powers on three-dimensional volumes. In all this, the line is the supreme ornamental device. "*Ein bewegter Linienzug ist immer schon bis zu einem gewissen Grade ein Symbol für Kraftwirkungen...*"⁷¹ How lines express the grammar of internal energy flows is somewhat more complex. In buildings as we see them, contours are the clearest expression of the limits of the energy effects. They are a distinct expressive material for the powers which work inside of objects. "*Was nämlich die Fläche*

*als organisch geschlossenes Ganze ganz besonders hervorhebt, ist die Stetigkeit der Kontour ohne Ecken.*⁷² The ornamental forms of contours are purely surface ornament, used to represent vertical movement beneath. Given this understanding, there are two essential ways to ornament:

Bei Kringel hatten wir die Symbolisierung einer Krafrichtung durch gleichlaufende Linienzüge, hier begegnen wir dem zweiten Hauptmotiv der inneren Flächendekoration, der Symbolisierung einer Kraftstrahlung durch mehrere Senkrecht zu den Kraftstrahlen verlaufenden Linien, wie wir auch schon bei der Flächenkontur betont haben.⁷³

Both types of linear movement are striving powers, whose movement, like that of water, is directed by conflict with checks and inhibitions on their direct flow. To take the first kind of ornamentation, Geiger visualized these inner powers within the building's corporeality as resembling liquid flows which produce rings. The second type of movement, of lines moving at perpendicular angles to one another, eventually leads to the use of spirals.

This lineal symbolization of a building's functions became one of the most recognizable attributes of the *Moderne*. A symbolic language is posited and expressed on a building's forms, subordinated in some cases to logical connections and in others to individual inspiration, but established upon epistemological grounds which share a great deal with earlier ornamental languages. This connection was sometimes made explicit, and other times denied. In the case of Bahr's and Obrist's more subjectivist inclination, creativity was modelled upon the individualist formulation of the great Renaissance artist. And, as we saw in Endell's texts it was important to continue the unsullied crafts traditions of ornamentation. Yet, for van de Velde and Geiger, the symbolization of spatial and tectonic structure became a paramount issue.

Loos's Rejection of the Moderne

Abstractly, the stress on artistic meta-languages expressed belief in the unity of creation in the practical arts. Practically, it kept attention riveted on expressive terms,

and not those of structure or use. As idealist concerns for monumentality and beautiful appearance had earlier blocked what seemed stridently purposive lines of argumentation, so too the focus on artistic expression in the *Moderne* left practical issues in the background. Despite frequent mentioning of the need to unify artistic and utilitarian expression in architecture, none of the above texts emphasized utilitarian issues. In some cases they are accepted as the basis for design, but then are not mentioned any further. Finally, lost in this pursuit are the practical questions of how to design for a rapidly changing modern world. Loos and other functionally-minded architectural writers at the turn of the century recognized these proclivities. These theories and designs of the *Moderne* became, especially for Loos, among the fundamental reasons not to trust any suggestion to merge utilitarian and artistic considerations in design.

Despite the acidity of his later insistence on this issue, Loos's opinion of the *Moderne*, and in particular, the *Wiener Secession* and its efforts to overcome historicism, was at first quite hopeful.⁷⁴ In his earliest remarks on Viennese contemporary design, "Eine Concurrenz der Stadt Wien" (1897), he praised the pavilions of Hoffmann and Olbrich: "*so hätten wir ein Idealproject vor uns, wie wir es dem wiener boden gar nicht zugetraut hätten.*"⁷⁵ Loos's compliments were derived from his assessment of the works' honesty, their straightforward proclamation of their function.⁷⁶ Further, his disdain for novelty, and misdirected emphasis on imagination, reflected a deep concern for tradition in the practical arts, and he saw Hoffmann as having a different, but interesting solution to this problem. In an early review specifically about Hoffmann, "Ein Wiener Architekt, (1898)" Loos began by saying that it was difficult to write about Hoffmann.⁷⁷ Putting the matter bluntly he wrote:

Für mich ist die Tradition alles, das freie Walten der Phantasie kommt bei mir erst in zweiter Linie. Hier aber haben wir es mit einem Künstler zu thun, der mit Hilfe seiner überquellenden Phantasie alten Traditionen, und auch ich muss gestehen, dass es sehr viel Ölgötzen darunter giebt, erfolgreich an den Leib rückt.⁷⁸

Loos went on to describe how several of Hoffmann's projects went a long way to solving material questions in design.

Yet, as early as October of 1898, in an article "Kunstgewerbliche Rundschau I," Loos launched his first direct attack against the *Wiener Secession*, and by association those cardinal principles of related *Jugendstil* movements in northern Europe.⁷⁹ In so doing, Loos noted that while there is a new decorative art movement, it is not "our" style. Unlike our clothing and transport vehicles, the arts and crafts of this movement are not modern: "they are full of references to abstract things, full of symbols and memories."⁸⁰ It seemed apparent that they are too influenced by the continual search for formal novelty. And, as Loos wrote, since there is nowhere else for our new artists to turn for formal stimulation - all other sources already exhausted - than Japan, we end up imitating the Japanese; giving up symmetry, and stylizing and decorating the surface of increasingly dematerialized objects.⁸¹

The cultivation of memories, of artifice, was also condemned by Loos's friend Karl Kraus. Kraus, who began writing literary and cultural reviews in the early 1890s, founded the newspaper *Die Fackel* in 1899. In a long series of essays, whose themes were closely linked to those of Loos, Kraus depicted the fragmentation of modern life, and especially the discrepancy between public demeanor and private thought. Greatly motivated to deflate false middle class values, he inveighed against *Kulturillusionen*, and the oppression of minorities by this newly dominant class. His essays portray the consequences of extending middle class standards to such groups as the poor, children, prostitutes and homosexuals.

In "Technik und Tod" (1905), Kraus described a train wreck in order to undermine the false pride in technical achievement which marks public statements by the Austrian government: "*Österreich ist das Land, in dem Schamperei zum Schicksal wird und Schicksalswendungen durch Redewendungen übertüncht werden.*"⁸² Later, in "Das Ehrenkreuz" (1909), he dissected the false justice meted out by the upper classes to the

lower classes: "*Denn die Justiz ist eine Hure, die sich nicht blitzen läßt und selbst von der Armut den Schandlohn einhebt.*"⁸³

The project of both Kraus and Loos was to undermine *Willkürherrschaft*. Much of Loos's displeasure with the architecture of the Viennese *Moderne* derived from his belief in separating practical domestic design from the arbitrary stylistic considerations of the middle classes. In "Die Interieurs in der Rotunde" (1898), Loos maintained that interior design conform to standards which reflect actual life. Again, like Kraus, he described architects as ethereal judges who are out of touch with life. Thus the situation for architectural interiors was severe, as stylish rooms tyrannize their poor occupants.⁸⁴ While a pompous facade can understandably cause a great deal of consternation, pretentious inflexible interior spaces are positively unbearable: "*Die wohnung war nie fertig; sie entwickelte sich mit uns und wir in ihr. Wohl war dein stil darin.*" A room whose guiding principle is an irrelevant style, therefore, is unable to grow. While, to the contrary, a home that grows together with a family can withstand a great deal.⁸⁵

Loos's equation of design quality with adherence to natural and objective principles is brought home in an article for Der Architekt. In "Die alte und die neue Richtung in der Baukunst" (1898), Loos did not hesitate to formulate an extreme position for his thoughts. Since his opponents were the emerging *Moderne* designers, he went immediately on the offensive against the growing preoccupation with design based either upon innovation for its own sake or the subjective emotions of its creator. In one instance, he seemed to be arguing against the new theories of empathy and perception when he wrote that people's feelings for buildings are not inborn - i.e., not the result of either innate psychological or physiological processes of the sense organs - but produced by experience. Experience for Loos was not an exclusive matter of subjective sense-organs, but the accumulation of impressions in everyday life and culture. A concern for *diese anerzogenene gefühle* underlies the permanent importance of tradition for the designer.⁸⁶

Loos's abhorrence for stylistic novelty of the *Moderne* was shared by several other writers in the practical arts. Already in 1901, Richard Graul had deplored the commercialization of the *Jugendstil* and *Sezessionstil* as an abominable mish-mash:

Der Heisshunger nach immer neuem Abbildungsmaterial, nach Motiven und Skizzen aller Art hat die Ansprüche an die Qualität so herabgestimmt, dass auch die armseligsten Schüler- und Dilettantenarbeiten erhalten müssen, um den modernen Stil zu charakterisieren.⁸⁷

In the same vein, Heinrich Pudor's "Moderne Inneneinrichtungen" (1902) asserted that the so-called *Jugendstil* or *Secession* style was only a fashion and was already in decline because its costly furniture was tasteless:

Jeder überflüssige Luxus und jede nicht zweckmässige Zierform wirkt parvenuhaft und ordinär. Hier berühren wir den Krebschaden des modernen 'Jugendstiles.' Die Zierformen sind an diesen Möbeln meistens nicht nur nicht zweckentsprechend, sondern zweckstörend. Sie sind nicht nur überflüssig, sondern hinderlich.⁸⁸

In "Die Sehnsucht nach dem Neuen" (1897) Fritz Schumacher, a follower of Morris and Ruskin, began a series of critical articles on the new ornamental style. From the first, he was doubtful about modern culture's idolatry of the revolutionary ornament of the line and surface. Whatever the innovative joy from the concoction of new ornament may be, Schumacher understood the essence of architecture as grounded in organic development out of historical forms, and felt a danger in pure, aesthetic treatment.

Die ästhetischen Aufgaben unserer Zeit zeigen sich nach alle dem in einer ganz bestimmten Linie, und hier giebt es vieles und wichtiges zu lösen. Aber es handelt sich nicht um eine revolutionäre Umwälzung veralteter Bauprinzipien, sondern um die fortschreitende Lösung einer ganzen Reihe künstlerischer und technischer Einzelfragen, die sich einem bestehenden Gerippe einordnen, beziehungsweise dieser Gerippe ergänzen und verbessern. Von diesem Standpunkte aus erscheint das Gebahren derjenigen, die da glauben und predigen, dass eine Revolution in den architektonischen Ansichten unserer Zeit im Anzuge sei, gar unverständlich - Die ganze Erscheinung beruht wesentlich auf einem grossen Ueberschätzen der Bedeutung des Ornamentalen für die architektonischen Künste.⁸⁹

As a result of its secondary character, ornament should not be considered as the melody of design, but only an accompaniment for that melody. For Schumacher, the striving to find the new in ornament is not architecture.

Later, Schumacher critically read as characteristic of the art movement of the present age a preponderance of the naive, uninfluenced instincts of the artist. Distrusting design in the manner of Robinson Crusoe, that heroic myth of original artistic personality, Schumacher's "Tradition und Neuschaffen" (1901) contained a plea for a more secure *Leitschnur* for design in architectural tradition. The choice would be whether architecture follows the contemporary artistic personality - the road to fashion - or that of the historical past; boring maybe, but healthy in the end, because of its organic source.⁹⁰ In a line of reasoning Loos would approve of in part, Schumacher went on to demand that architecture refuse the painter's illustrious connection with nature. Clearly, as an abstract functional art, architecture is last among the arts able to immerse itself successfully in such pursuits. In any case, such abstraction for the architectural art would mean living utterly outside of its real *Triebkeime* in reality. Thus, while nature itself could be the foundation for painting, for architecture historical development must take that role. Schumacher thought that the foundations for design must be based in organic traditions, not things of chance, or playful decoration, "*jene Grundgedanken, die langsam in jahrhundertelangen ununterbrochenen Werden die symbolischen Ausdrucksformen der Architektursprache entwekelten.*"⁹¹

Finally, in a related article, "Architektur und Kunstgewerbe" (1906) Schumacher accented his opinion that the development of surface ornament has had disastrous effects on architecture, a "*stilisierten Pflanzengerank garnierten Fassaden.*"⁹² Such surface decoration means nothing at all for three-dimensional cubic construction such as architecture.⁹³ Indeed, for Schumacher the error of the *Mode:rne* has been to be content merely to express new and original forms. What is much more important is to adapt forms to the needs of modern life:

der Sinn für Qualität ist es, der nach Ausdruck ringt. Nicht um diese oder jene Form handelt es sich in unserer Geschmacksbewegung, nicht um einen Linien- oder Ornamentationsart, wie die blöden Karikaturen findigen Geschäftssinnes dem Publikum unter der Firma 'Jugendstil' oder

'Sezessionsgeschmack' glauben machen wollen. Sondern um eine Geschmacksprinzip, das vorläufig nicht fragt nach ästhetisch-formalen Gesichtspunkten, die nicht mit dem Begriff 'stil' begrenzen kann, sondern nur fragt nach echt oder unecht: echt im Material, echt in der Arbeit, echt in der Künstlerischen Gesinnung.⁹⁴

Important today are not narrow artistic questions, but the great questions of the most general nature.

Loos's similar disdain for the artistic impulse toward scientific abstraction and the pure flight of the imagination is evident in his story about the saddlemaker of 1903, a possible reference to the *Wiener Werkstätte*, founded the same year by Josef Hoffmann and Kolo Moser.⁹⁵ At issue here are the saddles of an isolated saddle-maker, who working on his own, ended up designing saddles - "that were so formed" - that they were increasingly different in appearance from those saddles produced by other saddle-makers in the past couple of hundred years. Dismayed at this lack of a modern sensibility, and hearing about the new artistic activities of the *Wiener Secession*, he went to hear what its leader thought of his saddles. The professor remarked upon seeing the saddles that they were not at all modern, and used words like "art in hand work," "individuality," "Hermann Bahr," and "Ruskin" to back up his rather harsh judgement. Seeking an explanation for this rebuff, the saddle-maker asked to look at the sketches of saddles by students and professors at the *Secession*, and was thoroughly astonished, responding: "*Herr professor! Wenn ich so wenig vom reiten, vom pferde, vom leder und auch von der arbeit verstehen würde wie sie, dann hätte ich auch ihre phantasie.*"⁹⁶ The moral of the story was that "he made saddles. Modern? He didn't know. Saddles."⁹⁷ We are told shortly thereafter by Loos to avoid van de Velde..."*eine blasphemie auf den tod.*"⁹⁸

In light of the continued attempts during the first decade of the twentieth century to ground a unified style merging art and utility, Loos continued his critical line of thought in his essay "Meine Bauschule" (1907), and wrote that today's architecture is closed-off in thinking in surfaces.⁹⁹ Foremost, he regarded the movement between subjective and

objective theoretical positions as misconstrued. Good design, for Loos, had nothing whatsoever to do with prior considerations of artistic or stylistic relevance. It is an affair, rather, of discovering and retaining a true way of doing things. Innovations are an aspect of this conception, but they are to be admitted only when new circumstances necessitate a change from an established way of doing things. In many cases, as Loos pointed out with reference to the book typography of the firm Poppelbaum since 1783, old design methods retain a modern vigor. Compared, for instance with the false images of Secessionists, Loos likened good design to thinking not about what is new, but only about what is right, or: *"Mit der Wahrheit, und sei sie hunderte von Jahren alt, haben wir mehr innere Zusammenhänge also mit der Lüge, die neben uns geht."*¹⁰⁰

Karl Scheffler, in his Moderne Baukunst (1907), also deplored the attempts of the twentieth century stylistic movements to characterize art and craft, art and functional object as one and the same thing. Writing that the goals of the craftsman and artist are different, Scheffler saw the former's allegiance to necessity, while those of the artist relate to the creation of beautiful forms. Describing the false search for a unified style, he wrote:

Man wollte die Einheit, wo vollkommene Einheit nicht möglich ist, weil auf der einen Seite der profane Zweck herrscht und auf der andern der ideale. Die Zeit müsste darum bald kommen, wo die beiden unnatürlich eng verschränkten Kräfte wieder in ihre gesetzlichen Bahnen zurückstrebten.¹⁰¹

Accordingly, Scheffler was critical of van de Velde in particular, whom he saw as avowing an emphasis on the character of materials, but really stressing the aesthetic over the aims of handwork, a deception which results in the production of works of art that are adverse to both materials and function. Throughout van de Velde's pieces ideas of art predominate, and what is extremely misleading is the fact that the same ones are used for different materials: *"immer kehren dieselben Liniengebilde und plastischen Ornamentgedanken wieder."*¹⁰² Overall, Scheffler felt deceived by the new style's predominant aesthetic will.¹⁰³ In general, the direction that Scheffler and other objectivist theorists desired is

encapsulated by Franz Drobny's three great principles of architecture: 1.) truth in construction; 2.) honesty of materials; and 3.) harmony between function and form.¹⁰⁴

Thus, while principles of the unified style theories spread throughout the European continent and beyond, as the first decade of the century took on experience, their reception became increasingly skeptical. In this vein, in his great survey of the applied arts, Kunst und Industrie (1910) Heinrich Waentig concluded that despite its promises, this new decorative arts movement lacked the harmonious unity of English Arts and Crafts. It suffered a dearth of objectivity. As Waentig continued, there was a clear peril that artists would ignore the pressing demands of lighting, heating, and other conditions of modern life, and that "*die Künstler die Zimmerform und ihre Dekoration bloß aus ihrer Phantasie schöpften, daß sie ihrer Luxusausschmückung die Raumbedürfnisse beliebig anzupassen suchen würden.*"¹⁰⁵ He regarded, in this sense, the 1910 Darmstadt Artist's Colony as an example of luxury art in costly materials, which instead of serving life, brought forth only a decorative style.

A year earlier, in "Architektur" (1909), Loos made his most succinct comments on the perpetual futility of his age to discover its own style. While at first mocking the excesses of nineteenth century historicism, Loos went on to condemn the extension of the cosmic myth of ornament inherent in *Jugendstil*. The nineteenth century could not, or did not want to, recognize its own style, that of being unornamented. Obviously, the young artists of the twentieth century want to make the same mistake. Deriding the state of events, Loos commented that artists falsely copied ornament of past ages and when there was none left to copy they invented new ornament. He christened "Humbug" as the appropriate name for the style of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁶

Hermann Muthesius also shared a contempt for those irresponsible flights of the artistic imagination which resulted in the failure of the twentieth century to come up with a style of its own. He blamed the overt artistry of the *Moderne* on an inability to banish

stylistic thinking, which he felt was little changed from the decades of stylistic succession in the nineteenth century: "*Die Forderung eines neuen Stils scheint kaum vernünftiger als etwa die, statt des klassischen Stils den gotischen anzunehmen.*"¹⁰⁷ In arguing for the need to abandon the idea of style in Stilarchitektur und Baukunst (1902), Muthesius implored architects to think of the new material, constructive and transportation demands of the twentieth century, basing design on the foundation of practical needs, including: plan, structure, creation of spaces, composition of windows and doors, and sources for warmth and illumination.¹⁰⁸ Finally, in stating that architecture searches for its essence in content, and not form, Muthesius seemed to deny once and for all a search for architectural essence in the dramatic display of ornamental form.

This notion that artistic culture, and for that matter architecture, is dependent upon general culture was also taken up by the Viennese architectural writer Joseph August Lux in his article, "Stilarchitektur und Baukunst" (1902), based on Muthesius's book. Like Muthesius, Lux admonished *Stilarchitektur* for its absolute formalism derived from the deluded realm of the professor of aesthetics. We are told, for instance, that the miserable 'palace architects' of rental buildings are exemplars of an unartistic century. Further, what is important for the artistic judgment of a time or a people are not museums, academies, and artists unions, but rather the question, whether and to what extent art belongs to the living necessities of a people. Lux went on to say that luxury and art are therefore almost opposing concepts.¹⁰⁹ This effort to reorganize architectural knowledge meant that a living art of building begins by banning the concept of style. These assumptions by Lux can be taken almost as synonymous expressions of Loos's despair at architectural decadence. Certainly, that is true of the tacit assumption that architecture, once considered the mother of the arts, is now highly questionable as an art altogether.

Defining Architecture as Art and/or Use

Despite strong tendencies by Loos and others to compartmentalize the activities associated with architecture, during the first decade of the twentieth century the urge for unity remained strong. Insofar as the presence of industrial activity in society grew, new critical arguments were often justified on the basis of industrial values. They continue, for the most part, the main line of explanation developed in nineteenth century *Kunstgewerbe* discourse concerning the fall of art within the crafts. In this regard, both Lux and Muthesius accepted the reconcilability of art and industry, of fine and practical art.

It is safe to say that for these writers such a reconciliation was not an after-effect of a regeneration of architectural potentialities. It was the essential stake that promised a solution to the paradox of architecture and modern life. Although he condemned stylistic exteriorities, Muthesius accepted the craving to stamp architecture with symbolic forms. In "Architektonische Zeitbetrachtungen," (1900), after listing the content-based particularities to which design must conform, he went on to speak of the expression of the artistic personality, the representation of emotions in architecture: "*Und so stellt sich in der That die heutige Baukunst die Aufgabe das Erhabene, das Düstere, das Festliche, das Fröhliche, das Liebliche, das Wohnliche, das Gemüthliche darzustellen.*"¹¹⁰ Likewise, in Stilarchitektur und Baukunst, Muthesius's theory accepted the necessity of artistic principles in architecture. In distinction to the spasmodic expression of fashion in the nineteenth century, the personal speech of the modern architect must fully express contemporary life.

Sie müssen eine ausgesprochen moderne Gestaltung verkörpern, sie müssen das Empfinden unserer Zeit ebenso widerspiegeln, wie das mit reichem Akanthuswerk überzogene Kanonenrohr das Empfinden des siebzehnten Jahrhunderts oder die mit vergoldeter Schnitzerei verzierte Sänfte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts verkörperte.¹¹¹

Lux followed Muthesius's lead in his summons for an artistic revival within architecture based upon the models of the applied arts and engineering. First, Lux claimed

that the technological realm, the use of iron and glass for railway stations, bridges, and transportation vehicles, demonstrably combines in a strong objectivity new thoughts and needs.¹¹² Second, like van de Velde, Lux claimed that *Kunstgewerbe* furnishes architecture with clear hints of how to replace the senseless nature of a decorative art with an objective art, creating its design possibilities out of the essence of things themselves.¹¹³

In *Kunstgewerbe und Architektur* (1908), Muthesius went even further in saying that architecture is art; in fact, if not in current practice. The road to a recovery of artistic values for architecture, we are told, must embody the same spirit which motivated the *Kunstgewerbe* movement.¹¹⁴ Like *Kunstgewerbe*, which placed a fundamental, general artistic education in place of the conveyance of the superficialities of the old styles, so should architecture learn the ways of the "*großen tektonischen Gesamtkunst*."¹¹⁵ In such a way, architecture can reintroduce artistic elements. For Muthesius this meant - to a certain extent - an aesthetic of engineering works, of the industrial machine. In describing machines, he noted that not only from a technical point of view, but also from an artistic one, they are works of the highest order. It is by virtue of their embodiment of the impulses which drive the spirits of the age that they are an incarnation of artistic values. Furthermore, this signified that: "*Neue Taten geben neue ästhetischen Gesetze mit neuen Maßstäben und neuen Grundsätzen*."¹¹⁶ As a result, iron locomotives and bridges are the functional and objective creations which supply us with new aesthetic laws. Architecture must follow, according to Muthesius, "*der exakten Deckung des Bedürfnisse (realen) und der Erzeugung einer künstlerischen Wirkung (idealen)*."¹¹⁷

Advocacy of a machine aesthetic which would unify art and industry was also a matter of concern for Friedrich Naumann. For Naumann, as we mentioned earlier, the essence of the contemporary age lay in its machine-based industry. Linking the existence of art and industry throughout history, he was certain that the healthful pre-conditions art

emerge where economic conditions are growing, where there is a "*finanziellen Aufschwung*."¹¹⁸

Je mehr wir uns der Qualitätserzeugung zuwenden, desto besser wird es um die Durchschnittshöhe der deutschen Menschen stehen. Hier ist der Punkt, wo Kunst und Handels-politik und Sozialpolitik sich berühren.¹¹⁹

Further, anticipating the German economic philosophy of the 1970s and 1980s, Naumann called for the creation of a strong import sector as the foundation for all social progress within the country. This new productive capacity of German industry, he surmised, will be the driving force for a new German style of art as well.

The marriage of industry and art, then, is dependent upon an organic union with social and economic forces. On this matter, it is quite clear that Loos was not in agreement. In the essay "Kulturentartung" (1908), Loos strenuously objected to the aims of the new union of artists and industrialists, *Der deutsche Werkbund*, and its conspicuous attempt to recreate factory-produced objects by infusing them with the spirit of the artist. The *Werkbund*, Loos remarked, was simply a more sophisticated version of the *Secession*. And, since he no longer regarded the early works of Hoffmann as achievements, Loos predicted much the same falling from grace for the *Werkbund*. Thus, while ten years earlier Loos had praised Hoffmann's interior decoration of a sales room at the Apollo candle factory, he was adamant against praising it now. He described how the passage of time had shown us its error, and predicted how the next ten years will do the same for the work the *Werkbund*.¹²⁰

For Loos, members of the *Werkbund* want essentially the same end result as historicists and members of the *Secession*. Despite the great differences between escapist architects like Olbrich and industrially-minded thinkers like Naumann, Loos detected a common urge to mix art and functional products. Describing the *Werkbund*, he stressed that they do this by trying to put something else in the place of our present urban life: "*Der bund will dinge, die nicht im stile unserer zeit sind, für die ewigkeit arbeiten. Das ist*

schlecht.¹²¹ Loos criticized this attempt to chain our healthy everyday intuitions (inherited from tradition) to the passing styles of each year as harmful, and stated that in their pursuit of the unity of industry and art, the *Werkbund* members are no better than stylists.¹²² Interestingly, a notion of style was exactly one of the goals to which members of the *Werkbund* were striving. Francesco Dal Co summarizes neatly the *Werkbund* attempt to contain the experiential reality of the modern city.

The 'rebirth of the German style' thus signifies a calculated rejection of the allures of civilization - this being a feature typical of both the concept of *Wohnkultur* and the term *Sachlichkeit*, as we have seen - for the purpose of centering the practices of design and research around *Kultur*. On this basis style, articulated as the manifestation of such phenomena, becomes the successful integration of differing concerns, the maturity of the nation's social, economic, and productive organization, and the attainment of common goals on the part of political institutions and the artistic community.¹²³

As hopeful as this idea may have been, Loos chose not to avail himself of it, and was unwilling to accept attempts to create a style for the objects of everyday use and of art. It was painfully obvious to him that neither a single artist nor a great union such as the *Werkbund* can change the way our culture lives. For Loos, there is no fully developed sense of design anywhere else than in the present, and each motif that appears from inspirations foreign to our *Zeitgeist* is abandoned after a few years. Loos realized that the impulse to create anew was tantalizing, and unfortunately the *Werkbund* seemed destined to repeat the legacy of failure:

Sie hätten niemals in eine andere zeit hineingepasst und hätten auch nicht von anderen völkern verwendet werden können. Folglich sind sie im stile unserer zeit. Und wir in Österreich können uns in dem stolzen bewußtsein wiegen, daß diese dinge, außer in England, in keinem lande des erdballs in gleicher güte erzeugt werden.¹²⁴

It is unnecessary, Loos wrote, to want as Muthesius and Naumann do, the founding of a new style based on the harmonious interaction of artists, politicians, and industrialists. As Massimo Cacciari declares, for Loos, civilization is not synthesis - industrial art or applied

art - but two separate domains of art and industry: "*Dove il Werkbund si immagina ponti, Loos teorizza abissi...*"¹²⁵

What therefore set Loos apart from the beliefs of most theorists of the practical arts was his acceptance of *Zivilisation* instead of *Kultur*, a belief based on the irreconcilability of the modern idea of art with objects of use. The problem for Loos was to generate the conditions for architectural knowledge in relation to the productive processes of the hand crafts, and not the artistic values of the academies. But here again, Loos's thoughts merit comparison with those of his contemporaries. His opposition to the marriage of art and craft (or industry), for instance, was shared by the Dutch architect H.P. Berlage. A difference between the two theorists, however, lay in the fact that Berlage located architecture's problems in its absolute association with the other practical arts. He urged acceptance of architecture as a fine, and not practical, art.

The great historic marriage of architecture and the decorative arts, hailed especially by *Kunstgewerbe* theorists in the glorious pre-modern achievements of Bernini and the Roman Baroque, the German Renaissance, was viewed by Berlage as a wrong road taken by architecture. As he wrote in "*Baukunst und Kleinkunst*" (1907), the great mistake of Renaissance architects was their preoccupation with architecture's historicity as style. Because of this obligation, architecture sacrificed its essence, the enclosure of space by great walls, and turned its attention to non-architectural questions, primarily, those of decoration.¹²⁶

For Berlage, Riegl's *Stilfragen* showed that Semper's materialistic art theory was not sound. Architecture does not emerge out of *Kleinkunst*.¹²⁷ Rather, the Rococo is for him a striking example of the damage that the mixing of architecture and the practical arts can cause. Viewing history as an alternating pattern of dominance between architecture and *Kleinkunst*, Berlage was drawn most by the constructive and 'architectural' art of the Greeks and Middle Ages: "*Je geschlossener, je einheitlicher nun*

eine Kunst, desto tyrannischer auch wieder jene gegenseitige Wirkung von Kleinkunst auf Architektur und umgekehrt."¹²⁸ Interestingly, whereas Loos and Berlage criticized the effluence of decoration in building, they came to different conclusions as to how a purified architecture should be constituted. Both argued for the separation of architecture from certain social activities. Yet, whereas Berlage found a vision of architecture more in line with the grand thoughts of poetry, painting and music, Loos sought to associate architecture with the humble aims of the crafts.

How can we explain this divergence among two of the "pioneers" of modern architecture? At this point, I believe, the rupture of a linear conceptual history of modern architecture is evident. Conceptual disparity is an active agent in explaining the individual stories of modern architecture. Hence, my overall contention in this chapter, that the association of architecture with either the practical or fine arts is an issue of contention, becomes clearer. In the use of textual concepts, the values associated with architecture are transformed. The overall values that Loos or Berlage brought to a definition of architecture, for instance, are contingent on the meanings they stamp on particular concepts within their texts (e.g., craft, fine or practical art). These semantic definitions establish a terrain of discourse.

The textual representation of architecture, based as it is upon conceptual generation and conflict, does not approach closure. Clearly, the meanings impressed on concepts (and hence buildings) vary considerably between different architectural writers. The variation in argumentation within either side of the issue to unify or separate the practical arts bears out this thought. What is less apparent is that within the works of a single writer signifying practices are also often in conflict. The enumeration of a single subjective voice through a series of texts is a matter of historical representation and not historical reality.

This point will become clearer if we look into Loos's definition of modern style. As he regarded it, society already possessed a modern style, especially when the artist does not interfere: "But the people from the Werkbund mistake origins and effects. We do not sit so because a carpenter has so constructed a chair, rather the carpenter makes the chair in accordance with the way we want to sit."¹²⁹ Loos was confident that functional aspirations will make possible the creation of useful and attractive products in Austria. Hence, one does not ask if the objects we use daily are beautiful or not, but only if they perform well for our time. It is easy, Loos added, to work in our style:

Um den stil unserer zeit zu können, muss man ein moderner mensch sein. Aber menschen, die jene dinge, die bereits im stile unserer zeit sind, zu ändern suchen oder andere formen an ihre stelle setzen möchten - ich verweise nur auf eßbestecke - zeigt damit, dass sie der stil unserer zeit nicht erkennen. Sie werden vergeblich danach suchen.¹³⁰

Nevertheless, what it takes to be modern was left vague in his texts, defined only by Loos's circular reasoning: "those who work in the style of our time, work well. And those who do not work in the style of our time, work badly and shoddily."¹³¹

How a modern style is ultimately determined, and who has paramount power in coming to this decision was discussed by Loos in very contradictory terms. As we will see in successive chapters, Loos alternatively praised and condemned the architect as deliverer. In large part, his ambivalent stance on the architect stemmed from his paradoxical quest to place faith in societal values when the concrete manifestations of these values are seen by him as desultory and contrary. For all his apparent empirical rigor, the instability of this position led Loos's thoughts in an idealistic direction. In an attempt to escape the mixed, and inconsistent meanings of industrial society, Loos sought an ethical utopia where artistic and practical activity would each have their separate place.

To extend this idea of the fragmented subject, within Loos's texts and designs the conceptual boundaries between function and art, use and symbolism, are also not easy to trace. Artistic form-making is inherent in all of his buildings and interiors, and the

avowed separation of the languages of art and function was not achieved. In his residential buildings, principal facades are usually symmetrical, and in the large number of unexecuted projects for public buildings the visual impression is of a monumental, stripped classicism. Similarly, interior spaces are often less conceived for easy living than dramatic spatial movement and juxtaposition. Loos, as an architect, was a giver of forms. In his designs, the architect as artist often took precedence over the architect as translator of needs into design. This internal dissension arose because the conceptual boundaries established in certain of Loos's texts were too rigid for his design tastes.¹³²

Just as illusory as the absolute unity of art with functional design, was Loos's revolutionary separation of them, and his acceptance of the divide between *Zivilisation* and *Kultur*. Both positions of unity and separation express belief in what amounts to a totality of design and ideology. As Paul de Man describes this notion: "The idea of totality suggests closed forms that strive for ordered and consistent systems and have an almost irresistible tendency to transform themselves into objective structures."¹³³ Loos was correct in realizing that industrial capitalism had fragmented the semantic codes of traditional culture. Values of art were arbitrarily (and often disastrously) mixed with those of use. A total meaning for the arts and industries was, however, not possible.

Not possible, either, was the total separation of these realms of the modern world picture. Loos's demarcation of the boundaries of art and use, while an incisive acknowledgment of the fragmentation of societal activities characteristic of modernity, was a vain hope to contain this chaos. Like those positivist philosophers who struggled to create pure, formal languages emancipated from the imperfections of actual linguistic usage, Loos proposed an ethical utopia for the practical arts. In this respect, he shared a great deal with his chosen antagonists. Both impulses to separate and unify were inclined to impose a utopic order on architecture and the other practical arts. Whether sublimely integrated, or immaculately separated, they both implied the control of human activity by

absolute presuppositions: those of logic or those of the artistic imagination, those of economic determinism or those of national expression.

To a great extent, the philosophical atmosphere of the nineteenth century was characterized by such impulses to integrate and divide: represented, as mentioned in the previous chapter, by the schools of idealism and realism. While each depicted a dissimilar application of human reason to the phenomenal world, they were united in their struggle to erect an assured, and totalizing path for modern design. Like the other unities - historical style, functional design - and oppositions - nationalism and internationalism, idealism and realism - we have discussed so far, the theories of the *Moderne* and their detractors sought stability of identity for the increasingly unsteady concept of the human subject.

Notes

1. Giuseppe Ungaretti, "I have lost all" in Selected Poems, trans. Allen Mandelbaum (Ithaca: Cornell, 1975), p. 123.
2. See Gert Selle, Jugendstil und Kunst-Industrie. Zur Ökonomie und Ästhetik des Kunstgewerbes um 1900 (Ravensburg: Otto Maier, 1974). On the origins of the Art Nouveau throughout Europe see Stephen Tschudi-Madsen, Sources of Art Nouveau (Oslo: H. Aschehoug, 1956).
3. On the wide cultural dimensions of this movement see Gotthart Wunberg, Die Wiener Moderne: Literatur, Kunst und Musik zwischen 1890 & 1910 (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1981).
4. On the Secession see Werner Hofmann, Gustav Klimt und die Wiener Jahrhundertwende (Salzburg: Galerie Welz, 1970). On the Darmstadt exhibition see J. Roether & H.G. Sperlich, Die Darmstädter Mathildenhöhe (Darmstadt, 1960); G. Wietek, ed., Deutsche Künstlerkolonien und Künstlerorte (München: 1976). Describing the Darmstadt Colony, W. Fred wrote: Nun sollen diese Einem Ziele - dem innigen Anschluss von Kunst und Leben - zustreivenden Männer in einer Colonie vereinigt, der ruhigen Residenz Darmstadt die neue Blüte des deutschen Kunstgewerbes schenken." "Die Darmstädter Künstlercolonie," K & KH 4.1901, p. 431.
5. Granted, Otto Wagner's own explanation of the slogan is far from purely functional.
6. An exception to this tendency were articles like Theodor Volbehr's "Die Kunst-geschichte und das Verständniss für die neue deutsche Kunst," DKuD 7.Oct 1900 - March 1901. Volbehr, like many conservative-minded critics regarded that man can learn from history like one learns from nature, and viewed each creation of art as "the endpoint of an endless past and the starting point of an endless future." p. 304.
7. In arguing for an understanding of architecture in light of a comprehensive study of the past, J. Otzen wrote: "Dergleich Studien (of historical types, forms, materials, constructive techniques) haben einen unverkennbaren Werth, indem sie nicht allein unsere Kenntniss der Formen ihrer inneren Bedeutung nach erweitern und befestigen, sondern auch im besondern lehren, in welcher Weise und auf Grund welcher Verhältnisse die Weiter-Entwicklung der Bauformen im früherer Zeit stattgefunden hat und heute noch vor sich geht, beziehungsweise unter welchem Bedingungen und in welchem Grenzen eine Umbildung historischer Formen gerechtfertigt ist und wenn sie als Ausfluss von Willkür und Laune nur Anspruch auf beschränkte Dauer hat." "Zur Weiterentwicklung historischer Bauformen" DBZ 21.1887, p. 160.
8. Johannes Otzen, "Die moderne Kunst in der Architektur und deren Einfluss auf die Schule," Berliner Architekturwelt 3.1901, p. 229.
9. Franz Drobny, Von Alten und Neuen Stil im Kunstgewerbe; Ergebnisse der Pariser Weltausstellung 1900, (Salzburg: Salzburger Handels- und Gewerbekammer, 1901), p. 6.
10. Feldegg singularly described the period as a Renaissance for Vienna, although the period has come to be known as the Viennese Baroque.
11. Ferdinand Feldegg, "Wiens zweite Renaissance," Der Architekt 1.1895, p. 2.
12. Ferdinand von Feldegg, "Die moderne Architektur in Oesterreich," p. 18.

13.Ibid., p. 19.

14.Ferdinand Feldegg, "Ueber Grundlagen modernen Empfindens," Der Architekt 6.1900, p. 12.

15.Arthur Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Representation, trans. E.F.J. Payne (N.Y.: Dover, 1969), pp. 163-164.

16.Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy [1872], trans. Francis Golffing (N.Y.: Doubleday, 1956), p. 23.

17.Bahr, Secession, p. 38.

18.Hermann Bahr, Renaissance, Neue Studien zur Kritik der Moderne (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1897), pp. 19-20.

19.Hermann Bahr, Die Überwindung des Naturalismus (als zweite reihe von zur Kritik der Moderne) (Dresden & Leipzig: E. Pierson's, 1891), p. 158.

20.Bahr, Die Überwindung des Naturalismus, p. 153.

21.Ibid., p. 4.

22.Ibid., p. 135. As Bahr regarded the matter, the first radical tendency in modern art was toward simplification, and began with only a few adherents with Stendhal. This early period of nihilism was necessary to produce a romantic and thoroughly modern style. The early period can be characterized as a strong impression with the greatest intensity, a nihilism seeking to destroy all existing arts of style, and in their place install an absolute *Stillosigkeit*. A second period also rails against the old rhetoric, but only to replace it with a new style, one which expresses the new society: "*Sie sucht ein reicheres, geschmeidigeres, und dienlicheres Instrument für die raffinierten Sensationen, welche den Ausdruck der neuen Gesellschaft erleichtert.*" Ibid., p. 139.

23.Bahr, Renaissance..., p. 47.

24.Bahr, Secession, p. 40.

25.Ibid., p. 33.

26.Bahr described the facade, "sie soll uns das Wesen des Inneren auf eine kurze und fassliche Art, wie durch ein Motto, erkennen lassen. Sie ist gut, wenn wir von ihr sofort vernehmen, was hinter ihr ist." Secession, p. 62.

27.On the artistic life of Munich at this time see Peg Weiss, Kandinsky in Munich: The Formative Years (Princeton, 1979).

28.Hermann Obrist, "Hat das Publikum ein Interesse das Kunstgewerbe zu Heben?" (1896, 1898) in Neue Möglichkeiten in der bildenden Kunst, Essays (Leipzig: Eugen Diederichs, 1903), p. 33.

29.In a later essay he calls for the public to free themselves of the self-deception of art, and enlists the help of women: "Ihr ganzen Instinkt treibt sie zum Neuen, zum Heitern, zu dem was anregt und die ästhetische Neugier befriedigt." Hermann Obrist, "Hat das Publikum ein Interesse daran, selber das Kunstgewerbe zu Heben," in Kgbl Neue Folge 11.1900, p. 91.

30.Obrist, "Wozu über Kunst Schreiben und was ist Kunst?" (1899) in Neue Möglichkeiten in der bildenden Kunst, Essays, p. 24. To this degree, Obrist compares art to the effects of the sun and light on people. It should excite the viewer, but leave him healthy from the *Katarrh* of middle class life.

31.Ibid., p. 20.

32.Obrist, "Die Zukunft unserer Architektur: Ein Kapitel über das persönliche und das schöpferische" (1900) in Neue Möglichkeiten in der bildenden Kunst, Essays, p. 93.

33.Ibid., p. 95.

34.On the earlier development of a philosophy which privileged unconscious instincts see Eduard von Hartmann, Philosophy of the Unconscious: Speculative Results according to the Inductive Method of the Physical Sciences, [1869] trans. William Coupland (London: Kegan, Paul, Tranch, Trubner, 1931).

35.Leo Nacht, "Von der Persönlichkeit des Architektur," Deutsche Bauhütte 4.1900, p. 121.

36.Obrist, "Die Zukunft unserer Architektur," p. 105.

37.Obrist, "Neue Möglichkeiten in der bildenden Kunst," p. 162.

38.Obrist wrote, "Jedes Möbel muß in erster Linie seinem Zwecke entsprechend gebaut sein und alle Verzierung muss sich der Konstruktion und der zweckmäßigen Form unterordnen, darf niemals, wie bei den Renaissance und Barockmöbeln üppig werden und nur als Selbstzweck existieren." "Hat das Publikum ein Interesse das Kunstgewerbe zu Heben?" Ibid., p. 54.

39.Obrist, "Neue Möglichkeiten in der bildenden Kunst," p. 167.

40.Ibid., p. 143.

41.As John Heskett describes it: "In 1988 an influential study by Ferdinand Moser appeared: Ornamentale Pflanzstudien auf dem Gebiet der Heimischen Flora, and his ideas were rapidly taken up in applied art schools. In the following year, 1989, Professor Moritz Meurer, a Berlin teacher of ornamental studies published a pamphlet Das Studium der Naturformen an Kunstgewerblichen Schulen, exploring the consequences for curricula...The impact of Meurer's ideas, in particular, was enormous and was to fundamentally influence the nature of applied art education in Germany for many years...Linked to nationalistic and regional sentiment, it was a powerful force in movements to preserve and protect the traditional, rural environment and culture, and on another plane, was an important preparatory stage in the evolution of Jugendstil..." German Design 1870-1918, p. 26.

42.Georg Bötticher wrote: "Wir sind nun einmal mit Kenntnissen von den verschiedensten Stilarten so gänzlich überfüllt, so vollständig in der Formensprache aller möglichen Epochen bewandert und befangen, daß uns originale, naive Einfälle gar nicht mehr kommen können, daß unsere Kompositionen, aller Vornahme und Absicht zum Trotz, unwillkürlich, in dieser oder jener Stilweise sich gestalten müssen, daß sie, selbst wenn wir uns zwingen wollen original zu sein, zuletzt doch darauf hinauslaufen..." "Ein Wort zur Stilfrage" Kgbl 5.1889, p. 74.

43.Ibid., p. 76.

44.Moorman concurred in the notion that the creation of an artistic building is purely a matter of feeling. "Erst die Stimmung, jener aus der Seele des Künstlers in sein Werk gelegte, belebende Funke,

erhebt dasselbe über das Handwerksmässige." "Über die neuere Richtung in der Baukunst" Kgb Neue Folge 14.1903, p. 186.

45.Graul, p. 43.

46.Henry Van de Velde, Die Renaissance in modernen Kunstgewerbe (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1905), p. 114.

47.Ibid., p. 82.

48.Van de Velde described differences between the two phases of the nineteenth century Renaissance in Kunstgewerbe, that of the English and that currently taking place on the Continent: "Die Charakterverschiedenheit der beiden Renaissancebewegungen stammt besonders daher, dass die englischen Künstler sich von der äussern Schönheit der gotischen Kunst erobern liessen, während wir von der schöpferischen Seite ihrer Schönheit, von ihren hohen, aus reiner Vernunft entspringendem und offensichtlichem Grundgedanken eingenommen wurden." Ibid., p. 72.

49.Ibid., p. 29.

50.Henry van de Velde, "Allgemeine Bemerkungen zu einer Synthese der Kunst" (1895) in Zum neuen Stil, ed. Hans Curjel (München: R. Piper & Co., 1955), p. 47.

51.Van de Velde, Die Renaissance in modernen Kunstgewerbe, p. 103.

52.Henry van de Velde, "Prinzipielle Erklärungen" (1902) in Zum Neuen Stil, p. 125.

53.Henry van de Velde, "Was Ich Will" (1901) in Zum Neuen Stil, p. 81.

54.Heinrich Wölfflin, "Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie der Architektur" (1886), in Kleine Schriften, ed. Joseph Gantner (Basel: Benno Schwabe, 1946), p. 41.

55.See Heinrich Wölfflin, Renaissance and Baroque [1888] trans. by Kathrin Simon (Ithaca: Cornell, 1966).

56.Wölfflin, "Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie der Architektur," p. 43.

57.Writing at the same time, Karl Scheffler put forward a related explanation of the widespread argument against representation ornament and for a more, abstract play of lines and shapes. According to him, lower organisms are much better stimulated (because of physiology) by ornament than higher ones. "Unser Emfinden reagiert - bildlich gesprochen - nur auf reine Schwingungsverhältnisse. Ein Pflanzengebilde ist als Ganzes viel zu mannigfaltig für den Kunstsinn." Our sense organs are not as refined to pick up all details in the first look, and in art the first look is everything. "Meditationen über das Ornament," DK 8.1901, p. 401.

58.Later, Gustav Ebe questioned the potential of Van de Velde's, and other's, belief in the liberating power of lines of power in architecture: "Die Moderne hat es unternommen, nur durch wirkliche Nutzglieder ohne Aufwand von Scheinmitteln architektonische Wirkungen hervorzubringen, und verschmäht die Benutzung der traditionell-stilistischen Ausbildung der Einzelgliederungen. Das ästhetische Element, soweit es sich von den Ausdruck latenter dynamischer Widerstände handelt, soll durch plastisch oder malerisch ausgeführte sogenannte Kraftlinien versinnlicht werden. Allerdings ist es eine etwas Kühne Zumutung, dass man in der Linienführung der Moderne jedesmal das Symbol

einer innerhalb des Baustoffs wirkenden Kraft sehen soll." "Neuzeitliche Ausbildung organischer Bauformen," Deutsche Bauhütte 7.1903, p. 213.

59.Van de Velde, "Prinzipielle Erklärungen," p. 124.

60.Ibid., p. 132.

61.August Endell, "Möglichkeit und Ziele einer neuen Architektur" DKuD 1. Oct. 1897 - March 1898, p. 141. Endell did not categorically accept the beauty of all constructive arrangements. Some are aesthetically pleasing, others are not.

62.August Endell, "Originalität und Tradition" DKuD 9.Okt. 1901- März 1902, p. 293.

63.Ibid., p. 295.

64.Theodor Lipps, Ästhetik (Leipzig: Leopold Voss, 1923), p. 111.

65.Endell, "Möglichkeit und Ziele einer Neuen Architektur," p. 144.

66.Endell, "Originalität und Tradition," pp. 294-295.

67.August Endell, "Formenschönheit und Dekorative Kunst" DK 1898.2, p. 119.

68.Endell, "Möglichkeit und Ziele einer Neuen Architektur," p. 147.

69.Franz Geiger, "Die moderne Formensprache," Deutsche Bauhütte 6.1902, p. 97.

70.Ibid., p. 97.

71.Ibid., p. 96.

72.Ibid., p. 81.

73.Ibid., p. 88.

74.Loos even wrote two articles for Ver Sacrum in July of 1898.

75.PS, p. 21.

76.Likewise, in a review, "Die Ausstellungsstadt: der neue Styl" for the influential Viennese newspaper Neue Freie Presse (1898), Loos re-emphasized what he detected as a new building style at the exhibition. Observing that this new style did not emerge from servile copying or unrelated period styles, Loos set down four conditions for an exhibition building to be beautiful: 1) it must clarify that it is not erected for eternity, but only erected for the service of the exhibition; 2) it should command its material artistically and not imitatively; 3) it should draw the attention of the multitude; 4) already through its form it should lay open an idea of the objects exhibited within. PS, p. 45.

77.On Hoffmann, see Eduard Sekler, Josef Hoffmann, the Architectural Work (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1985).

78.PS, p. 53.

79. Soon afterward, in an article about Loos, "Kunst auf der Straße" (1899), Ludwig Hevesi branded Loos an "*aufrichtiger Nicht-Sezessionist*," especially for his Cafe Museum. Hevesi went on to characterize Loos's artistic sense as: "Schön ist ihm, was handlich ist; Stil wenn das gebogene Holz so gebogen wie möglich ist." Konfrontationen..., p. 12.

80. ILG, p. 35.

81. ILG, p. 38.

82. Karl Kraus Lesebuch, ed. Hans Wollschläger (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1987), p. 62.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

84. ILG, p. 75.

85. ILG, p. 78.

86. PS, p. 64.

87. Graul, p. 46.

88. Heinrich Pudor, "Moderne Inneneinrichtungen," Dekorative Kunst 10.1902, p. 356.

89. Fritz Schumacher, "Die Sehnsucht nach dem 'Neuen'" DBZ 31.1897, p. 632.

90. Schumacher, "Tradition und Neuschaffen," p. 39.

91. *Ibid.*, p. 41. Schumacher, however, departs from Loos's frame of reference when he goes on to write that the artistic essence of architecture lies in the symbolic expression of its constructive functions. *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

92. Schumacher, "Architektur und Kunstgewerbe," (1906) in Streifzüge..., p. 63.

93. Rather, the characteristic movement of cubic masses, of rhythms of the entire spatial image is the primary aspect of all architectural effects: the weight of spatial relations, division of supports and supported, openings and solids, light and dark. *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

94. Schumacher, "Ziele der Kunstgewerbeausstellung," (1906) Streifzüge, p. 222.

95. On the history of this important arts and crafts movement in Vienna see Werner J. Schweiger, Wiener Werkstätte: Design in Vienna 1903-1932 (N.Y.: Abbeville, 1984).

96. T, p. 25.

97. T, p. 25.

98. T, p. 43.

99. T, p. 66.

100. T, p. 32.

101.Scheffler, Modern Baukunst, p. 161.

102.Ibid., p. 164.

103.An exception he mentions is that of the group of artists working around Peter Behrens, who do not concentrate on details, but on the spatial entirety. "Bei ihnen herrscht eine etwas spekulative Universalidee, ihre Art ist epitomatorisch; dort geht man von kleinen, dem Raumhaften aber plastisch entgegenschwellenden Formkeim aus, der Architekt ist Erfinder. Auf der einen Seite sehen wir die Erkenntnisarbeit eines tektonisch gerichteten Willens, auf der andern einen temperamentvoll kritischen Geschmack. Die Tektonen erscheinen wie Psychologen, ihre Tätigkeit ist intuitiv; die Raumdisponenten muten mehr an wie mathematische Lyriker, ihre Tätigkeit ist methodisch." Ibid., p. 167.

104.Drobny, p. 20.

105.Waentig, p. 279.

106.T, p. 97.

107.Muthesius, "Architektonische Zeitbetrachtungen," Centralblatt der Bauverwaltung 20.1900, Nr. 21, p. 128.

108.Muthesius, Stilarchitektur und Baukunst, p. 54.

109.Joseph August Lux, "Stilarchitektur und Baukunst," Der Architekt 8.1902, p. 46.

110.Muthesius, "Architektonische Zeitbetrachtungen," p. 145.

111.Muthesius, Stilarchitektur und Baukunst, p. 51.

112.Lux, "Stilarchitektur und Baukunst," p. 46.

113.Ibid., p. 47.

114.Hermann Muthesius, Kunstgewerbe und Architektur (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1907), p. 27.

115.Muthesius, Kunstgewerbe und Architektur, p. 26.

116.Ibid., p. 32.

117.Ibid., p. 50.

118.Naumann, p. 6.

119.Ibid., p. 14.

120.T, p. 76.

121.T, p. 7.

122.T, p. 74.

123.Dal Co, p. 210.

124.T, p. 76.

125.Massimo Cacciari, "Loos-Wien," Oikos, Da Loos a Wittgenstein (Roma: Officina Edizioni, 1975), pp. 17-18.

126.H.P. Berlage, "Baukunst und Kleinkunst," Kgb Neue Folge 18.1907, p. 184.

127.Ibid., p. 185.

128.Ibid., p. 242.

129.T, p. 74.

130.T, p. 77.

131.T, p. 74.

132.What is relevant for textual discourse is not always meaningful in design. Writing, as we have been saying all along, is often indifferent to the realities of architectural production. In a sense, writing is indifferent to reality in general. It violates the social order because it imposes on given realities an autonomous history within representation. According to Jacques Derrida: "The written signifier is always technical and representative. It has no constitutive meaning." Of Grammatology, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1974), p. 11.

133.Paul de Man, "Form and Intent in the American New Criticism," Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism (Minneapolis, Mn.: University of Minnesota, 1983), p. 31.

CHAPTER 7

THE EXILE OF ART FROM ARCHITECTURE

In writing on architecture before the middle of the nineteenth century, "art" or "artist" were substituted for "architecture" or "architect" without any great semantic change. Architectural explanation did not preclude the connections of a monolithic, and all-embracing commentary on symmetry, beauty, monumentality: in short, things artistic. Quite simply, the creation of order in the built environment was explained foremost by art: by the lasting tradition of architect as artist; by the late eighteenth century explication of man's aesthetic enjoyment and fulfillment amidst visual phenomena; and by the systematization of art as a central element in theories of a unified architectural style. What resulted in text after text, was the inscription of architectural thought within the palimpsest of art theories.

During the nineteenth century, the ties between art and architecture were loosened.¹ By the time the century drew to a close, the conceptual quotient of art in theories of architecture and the practical arts dwindled: as Wilhelm von Bode wrote in 1896, the important problem for the applied arts was "*welche Gegenstände unserer häuslichen Umgebung oder des öffentlichen Gebrauches bedürfen der künstlerischen Ausbildung?*"² And, as the new century unfolded it was becoming increasingly difficult to use the phrase "art" - despite the intense attempts we have discussed to reintegrate it with utilitarian design - interchangeably with "architecture". Although architecture continued to be understood as an art by most twentieth century architects, architecture's dedication to the idea of art distinguished itself from that of painting and sculpture.

This separation of architecture from the fine arts was caused by the divergent responses of both fields to social and intellectual developments. This is to say that the set of circumstances in society which combined to define the concepts "art" and "architecture"

in close proximity in earlier times were no longer operative. We have already seen how the industrialization and commodification of economic production dissimilarly impacted the fine and practical arts. Central to the idea of the fine arts in the nineteenth century was a hostility to capitalist production and the marketplace. We recall that already in the eighteenth century, academies of art furthered an autonomous subjectivity of the fine arts.

From this time on, as we will discuss below, philosophical writings on aesthetics developed a cognitive basis for artistic understanding that transcended material needs and dependence on society. Furthermore, despite the efforts of theorists like Semper to reverse the tide of events, artistic ornament was severed from its historical ancestry with building and made to stand in relation to different and often abstract demands. Partly on the basis of these trends, a theory of artistic beauty was gradually crafted independent of practical life. The avant-garde of modernist painting and sculpture in the twentieth century made vivid the lack of truth in reality, destabilizing the concepts of representation, beauty and art itself. As Theodor Adorno described the *Entkunstung* that accompanied art's transcendental drive out of life, he presented an identity-destroying internal dialectic: art has to go beyond its own concept in order to remain faithful to itself. Hence, even the idea of the abolition of art is respectful of art because it takes the truth claim of art seriously.³

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the theoretical construction of "architecture" took a different course. To be sure, attempts were made to understand architecture as both a fine and practical art. Yet, as we have seen in different contexts, the individuation of an aggregate architectural identity was elusive. On the one hand, architects were also often hostile to capitalist production, and developed institutions to shield their own production from the ill effects of the marketplace. On the other hand, it was evident to many that architects would live or die at the hands of the marketplace. Recognizing these interrelated facts, many writers on architecture and the practical arts ambitiously tried to forge an organic relationship between the fine arts, the practical arts,

and the contemporary means of production and consumption. In these and other theoretical pursuits, architectural writers advocated the symbolic paraphrasing of modern life in new technologies and materials. In addition to the ideals of religion and philosophy, the bonds between building and nature and building and culture became a new ground for design. The goals of modern architecture, except in exceptional cases like that of *De Stijl* in the 1920s, rarely attempted the creation of a formal language autonomous from practice and transcending life. A negational critique of the formal conventions of building by architects lagged decades behind similar actions of painters, and it was not until the 1970s that architects seriously undertook to interrogate the notions underlying dwelling and building.

Clearly in the nineteenth century, architects were concerned with constructing a positive image of architecture consistent with both social and material reality and higher ideals. At issue for the architectural theorist were interloping questions of how architecture fits into art and how architecture fits into the practical world. Still, the pluralistic picture of modern design then emerging in the engineering trades, real estate industry, and scholarly disciplines brought indistinct understanding to this important question of identity. What is more, throughout the realm of artistic discourse the explicitness of architecture's ties to art became problematic. Architecture was thus burdened with a fragmented presence, an inconclusive practical nature that was increasingly alien to art and aesthetic theories of beauty.

Loos, as we have discussed, opposed transcending this impasse through the myth of organic unity so sought out by theorists of the *Moderne*, *Art Nouveau*, and *Werkbund*. He recognized instead, that art and architecture were not normatively linked, and that with the passing of time and a changing economic order, were actually becoming antithetical. Yet, because of the great desire on the part of most theorists of the practical arts to preserve the long and intimate relationship between art and architecture, none of Loos's

ideas was more controversial than his assertion that art should be excluded from everyday architectural design; in fact, from all design with the exception of monuments and funerary shrines.

What began as an attack by Loos on the educational methods of the large Viennese art and design schools, continued as a repudiation of ornament, and culminated in the texts of 1908-1910 in a theory which advocated removal of regressive artistic tendencies from architecture and the practical arts.⁴ Loos went as far as to reverse the nineteenth century theory that ornament develops in conjunction with civilization. He persuasively linked ornament with the primitive. It is my contention that Loos's disavowal of ornament and art was not solely an isolated reaction to a single development in architectural culture. Rather, as the following discussion will attempt to elucidate, it more likely represented an accumulation of separate impressions gained by his exposure to the wide spectrum of material and intellectual conjectures on the visual arts in the nineteenth century.

The Architect as Artist

In the late nineteenth century, the academic institutionalization of the visual arts remained an incomplete project as far as architecture was concerned. In an essay, "Unseren Jungen Architekten" (1898), Loos highlighted this issue by questioning the embrace of the architect with the marketplace. Elsewhere in his writings Loos accepted the dominant role of the bourgeoisie as builder, and the monetary considerations which this placed upon the entire design process. These economic relations were, after all, basic elements of the industrial age. Still, Loos held an aversion to the recasting of the role of the architect as slave to market pressures, and the demands of commercial sales. Because of the pervading commercial atmosphere which dictates both their education and practice, Loos observed that the choice of designs is dictated not by good design sense, but by the

taste of the marketplace, here Gothic and there Renaissance: "*Ob nun seine künstlerische Überzeugung mit der seines Brotherrn übereinstimmt, ist diesem architekten' gleichgiltig.*"⁶

Loos's observations on the role of the architect questioned architecture's content with reference primarily to the standing of architects as artists. Voicing the emerging theme of the avant garde artist living on the margins of society, the equation that true art and the marketplace are incompatible, Loos demanded that one has to be willing to starve and die for one's work in order to be called an artist, to stand up for one's convictions in spite of all financial temptations.⁶ Describing architectural culture, Loos lamented that for the most part architects derive their prestige from either the state, in the form of official exams and diplomas, or from their activity within the industry of building construction and sales.⁷ Neither are pure artistic activities. Must we then conclude that Loos intended for architects to become true artists, and renounce their claims to professional standing? If it is difficult for Loos to answer at this point, it may not be as hard in the case of those architectural theorists preceding Loos.

Loos's criticism of architecture tied to the marketplace and bureaucracy was an old refrain. In 1876, K.E.O. Fritsch stated that most architects stem from *Baubeamten* who lack any real connection to the world of art. Accordingly, it was the case that architects frequently have no experience in the world of art:

die häufig ohne wirkliches Kunsttalent, in oberflächlicher Weise vorgebildet und bei der relativen Seltenheit der Aufgaben nur ungenügend geübt, in der Regel kaum auf einen bescheidenen Grad von künstlerischen Dilettantismus Anspruch erheben konnten.⁸

In light of this, Fritsch reasoned, although there are many famous buildings and architects, there are precious few truly, creative thoughts in contemporary architecture.

Soon afterwards, in an essay, "Über die Vereinigung des Technikers und Künstlers im Architekten" (1877), L. Trzeschtik made a similar point. He wrote that many architects working for firms actually practice something more akin to engineering works than artistic works, and are embarrassed by artistic undertakings. All in all, Trzeschtik's article

emphasized, there is too much concentration on the technical and economic problems of practice. While he believed that in other lands architects are separated from such engineering tasks, in Austria freedom of artistic expression is almost impossible:

Bei uns in Österreich und in Deutschland muß fast der Architekt auch completen Techniker sein, und umgekehrt giebt es vorzüglich in Österreich ganz ungebildete Baumeister (Mauer), die sich den Titel Architekt aneignen, ohne zu wissen, daß der wirkliche Künstler vor allem Mensch sein muß.⁹

Predictably for his time, Trzeschtik concluded his essay with a recommendation that architects, as artists, solely concentrate on artistic questions.

Clearly by the turn of the century, the equation of architect with artist did not work the same magic it had for earlier generations. There were architectural writers willing to question the edict that the appellation artist had to be won at the expense of architecture's materialistic endeavors.

On reviewing the English collection of essays, Architecture as Profession or an Art (1892), by Robert Norman Shaw and others, Hermann Muthesius described the English system of education for architects, and the conditions of the debate on whether architecture is an art or a profession. While sympathetic to the English claim that the artistic side of architecture cannot be easily judged according to professional standards, and their contingent demand for greater artistic freedom, Muthesius was cautious about neglecting the scientific side of architecture. Writing that we cannot deny our time in order to create, he characterized the modern predicament of architecture as caught between the worlds of the imagination and practical life:

ein ewiger Gegensatz zwischen künstlerischem Schaffen und wissenschaftlichem Geiste bestehen wird, und dass namentlich unsere heutige Cultur mit ihrer streng untersuchenden Richtung einen gewissen zersetzenden Einfluss auf die schöpferische Thätigkeit des Künstlers haben muss, so folgt von selbst, dass von allen Künstlern der Architekt derjenige sein wird, dessen Inneres am ersten in Verwirrung geräth, weil sich in ihm beide Elemente stetig berühren.¹⁰

Placed before this question of the role of the architect, Otto Wagner was similarly convinced that its artists should accept the new industrial state of affairs. Wagner believed that dramatically new social conditions explained the role of the new architect, whose purview of tasks far exceeds that of the painter or sculptor. He stated that painters and sculptors can ignore the growth of scientific knowledge, whereas architects cannot. Specialization and factory production are the rules of building production, and it was clear to Wagner that while all architects must be engineers, "one can be a distinguished engineer without having to claim the title 'artist.'"¹¹ Material tasks could be practiced in isolation, but artistic questions were dependent upon a material investigation of reality.¹²

Writing within this environment, Loos was quick to admit that one would almost try to deny that architecture is still an art. As described in "Unseren jungen Architekten" (1898), the architect is neither a member of the artistic community nor accepted by the public as being capable of full artistry. For Loos, the unknown painter, the smallest sculptor, the weakest actor, and the most unaccomplished composer take unrestrictedly the claim of artist for themselves and the same will be willingly granted to them by the world. But the architect must have already accomplished something outstanding before one takes him up into the rows of artists."¹³ Likewise, Karl Scheffler later concluded that architects do not possess individuality, or the true makings of an artistic personality. Given his belief in the social role of architecture, Scheffler saw the architect as only a half-artist, and a worldman.¹⁴

Yet, originally, in Loos's earliest article, "Schulausstellung der Kunstgewerbeschule," written for the Viennese daily Die Zeit (1897), he had taken a different tack to the question of the artistry of architects. Here he suggested that the development of both architecture and the arts and crafts in Vienna was retarded by the academic techniques and attitudes of the fine arts educational establishments. These same themes were brought up almost fifty years earlier by August Reichensperger, who blamed

the French academic tradition for the dead imitation and domination of individuality then plaguing German creativity. Sounding much like Loos would later in opposing the Academy to medieval crafts, Reichensperger castigated such practices as the product of too much classroom learning.¹⁵

The thrust of Loos's invective demonstrated that dry academicism still ruled. Over thirty years after its founding as the integral teaching component of the Austrian Museum for Art and Industry, the independent status of the Vienna School for the Applied Arts in regards to the much older Academy of Fine Arts was still unclear. Indeed, it is likely that the founding of the new arts and crafts schools severely restricted the range of activities at the Academy, limiting it to the established fine arts. Clearly, the penultimate paradigm of art at the Academy resulted in its danger to the everyday design of crafts and architecture. Yet, the situation was somewhat different in the case of the Arts and Crafts School. The very status of this institution was compromised by what Loos characterized as an inattentiveness to its core mission, that of producing objects which are useful: "*Die kräfte, die aus dieser anstalt (Kunstgewerbeschule) hervorgehen, sind für die werkstatt, für das leben, für das publikum unbrauchbar.*"¹⁶ It was precisely an alertness to matters of art, and their concerns *a priori*, which held back the schools of applied arts.

If the restoration of a healthy climate for the arts and crafts was rather untenable in the presence of the academic art establishment,¹⁷ it seemed for Loos that the pressing problem lay in excluding art from the domain of the arts and crafts and architecture, and art education from the training of craftsmen and architects. This idea, that art and *Kunstgewerbe* are mutually exclusive activities, was already urgently stressed by Loos in 1897, more than a decade before his well publicized formulations on the hostility of art to domestic architecture. The matter is stated quite clearly: "*Drauf und dran, gesellen, die kunst ist etwas, was überwunden werden muss...(after all)...Revolution aber kommen immer von unten. Und dieses 'unten' ist die werkstatt.*"¹⁸ In his article, "Schulausstellung der

Kunstgewerbeschule" (1897), he asked whether we would rather entrust the design of a chair to someone who knows the five columnar orders inside and out, or to a designer who knows something about sitting.¹⁹ Moreover, Loos wrote that for the craft trades, the best drawings are worthless.²⁰

We are told soon again in the article "Der Silberhof und seine Nachbarschaft" (1898), that "the dilettantism of the drawing board would take possession of all forms."²¹ That same year, in "Die alte und die neue Richtung in der Baukunst", Loos continued this theme, and argued that there was no need in architecture for "*die gleichartige künstlerische durchbildung*."²² Further, in "Die Plumber" (1898), Loos argued with great hyperbole a drastic externalization of art in regard to everyday life. The reference here is to the notion that the Viennese should pay more attention to hygiene and less to art: "Instead of putting the cart before the horse, instead of spending their money on the production of art, they should first try to produce a culture. Next to academies we should build baths, and along with professors we should appoint bath attendants."²³ Finally, the question of whether an architect is an artist is taken up eleven years later in "Architektur." Here again Loos's argument was based on his assessment of the frivolity of architectural students concentrating all their energy on two-dimensional drawings. For Loos, a genuine building makes no impression on a flat surface, and interior spaces are without effect in photographs.²⁴ Drawings and photographs cannot substitute for the power of example.²⁵ Because of this insubstantial focus at the architectural schools, Loos concluded that architecture had sunk to a graphic art: "*Heute aber herrscht der flotte darsteller. Nicht mehr das handwerkzeug schafft die formen, sondern der bleistift*."²⁶ Instead of direct experience of spatial requirements, architects worry themselves over whether to draw this line with a one or a five pencil.

There is no doubt that Loos's rejection of art reflected his opposition to embodied ideologies of the academic schools of art. It is precisely his criticism of the set of values

that these institutions possessed that led to his realization of the dangers they held for architectural culture. In more general terms, the enshrinement of academic by the institutions of the fine arts was understood by Alfred Lichtwark (in 1901) as leading to the overall depletion of vital artistic energy within culture. Describing the changing conditions of the artistic and practical environment, Lichtwark stressed (like Muthesius) the growth of scientific knowledge since the eighteenth century. He blamed science for the retreat of art from culture's center stage. Whereas earlier mentalities were dominated by the institutions of the church, guilds, nobility, and university, in the nineteenth century all but the latter lost ground.²⁷ Lichtwark detected danger in this, and warned that the rapid growth of university-based knowledge and training is harmful to the arts. Claiming that the fine arts are under the spell of philosophy, he stressed that feeling is the expressive material of art. Art is a matter of the emotions and not reason, and must proceed from the organic development of particular conditions:

Künstlerische Bildung ist uns nicht ein Wissen um Werke, die wir vielleicht nie oder nur in Nachbildungen gesehen haben, oder um Kunst- und Künstlergeschichte, sondern die Entwicklung der empfindenden und gestaltenden Kräfte. Sie beginnt für uns nicht mit der Sehnsucht nach dem verklärten Einst und Fern, sondern mit der Liebe zum Heut und Hier.²⁸

Yet, throughout society, Lichtwark, like Loos, saw a lack of proper artistic education: unrefined dress, appearance and manners. Educated Germans, he went on to comment, lack *Anschauungsvermögen*. They have too little intuitive ability with their visual senses. Despite the number of schools for art, Germans are blind to the actual visual world of forms, and see unfortunately with their ears. They look at the work of art as something to think about or calculate.²⁹

Absolute Aesthetics and Architecture

The numerous critics of aesthetic philosophy throughout the nineteenth century came to similar conclusions. As we have seen throughout discourse on the practical arts,

the condemnation of aesthetics by architectural writers was understood as a corrective against the application of abstract philosophical criteria to both practical and artistic matters. Aside from the practical beliefs we saw earlier exalted by Hermann Lotze, the lively opposition of the technical and industrial, aesthetics as developed in Germany since the eighteenth century, was the quintessence of a way of thinking about architecture through abstract terms. Robert Zimmermann had written at the beginning of his Allgemeine Aesthetik als Formwissenschaft (1865) that philosophy concerns itself with concepts and not objects. For Zimmermann, aesthetic forms are valid *a priori*, not empirical, and a theory of art has one question to solve: through which combinations are forms aesthetically pleasing or displeasing?³⁰

The critical problem, as formulated by philosophers of aesthetics, was how to describe the completeness of aesthetic experience logically. Among the great number of aesthetic tracts concerning architecture published over the course of the century, Wenzel Hartig's Die Angewandte oder Praktische Aesthetik (1873) elucidated a set of characteristic principles.³¹ For Hartig, aesthetics are the basis for all of the arts, and embody the scientific teaching of beauty: "*der Zurückführung der Beurtheilung des Schönen auf ein Vernunftprinzip.*"³² This search for the grounds of beauty, upon which the aesthetic effectiveness of forms is based, made predicates of all architectural forms. Forms, in other words, are the sensual correlates of conceptual processes in the human mind. They are those objects which bring pleasure to the processes of the mind. As Hartig related, the founder of modern aesthetics, Baumgarten, sought to ground aesthetics upon the essence of art itself. Beauty for Baumgarten, Hartig related, was a sensually apprehended perfection, and, as such, beauty is the essence of all arts. Thus, the striving for formal counterparts to the conceptual notion of sensual perfection became an object of investigation by Baumgarten's successors in the course of the late eighteenth and entirety of the nineteenth centuries.

If Baumgarten introduced preliminary inquiries into the aesthetic, the mature philosophy of the aesthetic was grounded by Immanuel Kant's formulation of disinterested judgment as discussed in his Kritik der Urteilskraft (1790). Kant's idea of the judgement of taste, and of beauty, is that of pure contemplation. As the mediating link between understanding and reason (as discussed in Kant's first two critiques) the judgment of a work of art is conceived without interest as to use or need. Correspondingly, the aesthetic judgment is produced independently of both concept and desire. The viewer is emancipated from all objective meditation, and hence there is no interest in the use of the object.

Since aesthetic judgement is disinterested, Kant took it for granted that the pleasure derived from a work of art is independent of that work's practical function. Aesthetic judgment means, as Kant wrote, that "we do not want to know whether anything depends or can depend on the existence of the thing either for myself or for any one else, but how we judge it by mere observation."³³ In effect, aesthetic judgments result from a feeling of pleasure or pain in disinterested observation. "The judgement is called aesthetical just because its determining ground is not a concept, but the feeling (the internal sense) of that harmony in the play of the mental powers, so far as it can be felt in sensation."³⁴ Although Kant understood aesthetic judgment as universal and purposive, he believed that its governing operations occur solely within a given subject's mind; this is understood by the famous condition of *Zweck ohne Zweckmäßigkeit*.

Kant's formulation of the aesthetic had tremendous consequences for architecture and the applied arts. The architectonic expression of function or structure was ruled out by the aesthetic. The aesthetic idea of architecture became the representation of forms without any purpose, a standpoint which contradicted the forceful utilitarian aspects of Vitruvian tradition. John Dewey described Kant's subordination of function to contemplation as the anaemic conception of art: "Carried to its logical conclusion, it would exclude from aesthetic perception most of the subject matter that is enjoyed in the case of

architectural structures..."³⁵ Architecture, Kant himself wrote, is "the art of presenting concepts of things that are possible only through art, and whose form has for its determining ground not nature but an arbitrary purpose, with the view of presenting them with aesthetical purposiveness."³⁶ Despite these thoughts, Kant never formulated a clear theory of the limitations on architectural beauty. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to point out that Kant had enormous influence, and the legacy of the German aesthetic movement in philosophy has been marked by his exclusion of functional considerations in the pursuit of an ideal conception of architectural beauty.

It was readily apparent that due to architecture's overtly functional nature, aesthetic ideas might be restricted in notions of architectural beauty. It did not take long for F.W.J. Schelling to frame the question about architecture's status as a fine art: "To what extent can an art form that is subordinated to need and serves a purpose external to itself be counted among the fine arts?"³⁷ Schelling found that architecture can appear free and beautiful only insofar as it becomes an expression of higher ideas. Since the absolute nature of aesthetic judgment excludes considerations of need, and as architecture's essence is bound up with those very considerations, Schelling postulated that architecture, "to be a fine art, must be the potency or imitation of itself as the art of need."³⁸ Architecture must imitate itself as a mechanical art, and in so doing, make itself ideal and cast off attention to need. Merely functional form, in other words, is raised to beautiful form.

The aesthetic treatment of art as disinterested and ideal form was further transformed by Hegel's dialectic into a teleological process by which human expression gradually moves from concrete to spiritual expression; from sensuous knowledge in art to pictorial thinking in religion, and finally free thinking in philosophy. Associated as never before to philosophy and religion, art became the first stage in the realization of the immaterial spirit. In this way, Hegel proposed knowledge of both the phenomenal and

noumenal worlds; the Kantian *Ding an sich* is achieved through a process of creation which begins with architecture. As the most functional of the arts, architecture was considered by Hegel to be the first art to come into existence, and was thus relegated to the lowest level of aesthetic expression. It is the stage of the indeterminate idea, the unrefined expression of the idea in sturdy corporeal forms.

Hegel, like other philosophers, was all too aware that architecture is driven by needs.³⁹ What is more, from these primordial demands, as Hegel saw them, the trajectory of the unfolding of the idea begins: "need introduces into architecture forms which are wholly and entirely purposeful and belong to the (mathematical) intellect...the straight line, right angle, level surfaces..."⁴⁰ Architectural beauty, as an interval in the march of the spirit, requires the surmounting of these relations to the organic and varied, for example, the transition from Classical to Romantic architecture. Like Schelling, Hegel deemed architecture capable of only producing works which can imprint the meaning of their external shape symbolically. Despite its status as a fine art, Hegelian philosophy relegated architecture to questions of the lawful organization of masses. Ironically, in viewing the combination of forms, we search for the eventual release from exterior appearance, and the revelation of inner essence.

Hegel considered the gradual appearance of the immaterial spirit (from its first appearance in architecture to its final culmination in philosophy) to be the moving force of history. In an analogous vein, Arthur Schopenhauer described ideas as the definite grades of the objectification of the human will. For Schopenhauer, human will is the underlying motive for production and creativity. Engaged in a deeper physiological investigation than either Kant or Hegel, Schopenhauer contended that all knowledge of the forms of art must begin in the subject's consciousness. Like Kant, however, Schopenhauer drew a distinction between the phenomenal world as representation and the noumenal world of the will. The

subjective will, unlike Hegel's spirit, can never be known. What can be known are the will's objectifications, its representations.

Like Hegel, Schopenhauer placed the creations of architecture as the lowest level of the possible objectifications of the will. In the aesthetic contemplation of architecture the ideas apprehended are low grades of the will's objectivity, and are not works of deep significance or suggestive content. As Schopenhauer saw it, the conflict between gravity and rigidity is the sole aesthetic material of architecture, keeping forces in suspense. These ideas - inherent in architecture - such as gravity, rigidity, and hardness are the simplest and dullest visibilities of the will, "the fundamental base notes of nature."⁴¹ All ornamental work - of a higher aesthetic level - belongs to the plastic arts and not architecture. This conception of architectural beauty omits the idealization of constructive statics. As is the case in all speculative aesthetics, architecture is condemned for its concreteness; the fact that it does not abstractly depict the human idea or spirit, but gives us instead the thing in itself is a useful countenance.

As noted by Jonathan Crary, Schopenhauer's physiological affirmation of subjectivity was shared by later theories of perception:

for example, in the work of Konrad Fiedler (free artistic and unfree nonartistic perception), Alois Riegl (haptic and optic perception), and Theodor Lipps (positive and negative empathy) - all of which were then severed from the immediacy of the body and were posed as dualist systems of transcendental modes of perception."⁴²

In Ueber die Beurtheilung von Werken der bildenden Kunst (1876), Konrad Fiedler described the operations of artistic perception within the mind of the subject: "The artistic impulse is an impulse of cognition; artistic activity, an operation of the power of achieving cognition; the artistic result, a sequel of cognition. The artist does nothing else than achieve in his own universe the work of logical, creative configuration..."⁴³ Elsewhere writing specifically about architecture, Fiedler depicted the highest artistic task as the spiritual creation of form:

Es ist der geistige Aneignungsprozeß, durch der Mensch auf die mannigfaltigste Weise aus der unendlichen Menge der Einwirkungen, denen er unterliegt, ein geistiges Gebilde zu schaffen sucht, um überhaupt zu einem geistigen Besitztum gelangen zu können.⁴⁴

Similarly, in Heinrich Wölfflin's discussion of the basic elements of architecture, which he stated are divided into a dualist scheme of painterly and linear, the Swiss art historian detected an analogous deep human instinct of forming the unformed.⁴⁵

Against this subjectivized depiction of architecture's evocative powers as form-making, it is no surprise that architectural writers struggled century-long to maintain the status of architecture as a fine art. Moreover, if external factors (like use and materials) were slighted by aesthetics and dualistic theories, it was obvious that realism and idealism would become mutually opposing concepts in the architectural discourse. As bearer of the higher spirituality of design, the axiological categories of the aesthetic imposed a regime of so-called cognitive potentialities and limits upon architectural culture. This imposition of intellectual values accounted for the magisterial longevity and prominence given to ideals of the mind and spirit in the considerations of architectural appearance. Despite greater emphasis on architecture's tangible and cultural qualities as the century wore on, philosophical ideals of how the mind apprehended built forms were repeatedly invoked to maintain traditional notions of architectural appearance. In an unexpected occurrence, philosophical aesthetics, through an analytic luminosity of mental operations, actually prolonged the traditional themes of eurythmy, symmetry, character, and regularity which had been the axioms of classical architectural theory.

The aesthetic encasement of architecture inside cognitive processes presented formidable problems for architectural discourse. This is an understandable consequence of the philosophical undermining of categories like "purpose" and "the everyday". Given this destabilization of architecture's standing as an art, it was not by happenstance that many architectural theorists reacted negatively against the speculative tradition and its unjust debasement of architecture. Such observations were the subject of a review, "Das

Kunsth Handwerk und die Architektur im System der Künste" (1889) by Rudolf Adamy, professor of art history and aesthetics at the Darmstadt Technische Hochschule. Here, Adamy attested that the practical arts had indeed run afoul of philosophy. Adamy criticized aesthetic writings from Kant to Theodor Vischer as having neglected the naked form in itself, claiming that philosophers held a one-sided notion of beauty relating solely to intellectual and spiritual ideas. Architecture and *Kunsth Handwerk* had been shut out by the a-material requirements of aesthetic philosophy.⁴⁶

Arguing against Kant, Adamy claimed that one cannot establish a divide between free and dependent beauty. Each work of art, he wrote, has not only a purpose in itself, but also possesses a purpose outside itself, and in this sense is unfree.⁴⁷ Speculative aesthetics had wronged architecture in its condemnation of the discipline's excessively practical nature. Rather, Adamy wanted us to believe, architecture is as free an art as painting and sculpture. Each art has its own area: painting-surface; sculpture-body; architecture-space. From these areas, the arts interrelate so much so that "an artwork of architecture in the highest sense is unthinkable without paintings on the interior and sculptures on the exterior."⁴⁸ Repeating the old refrain, Adamy wanted us to believe that architecture is the leading art because of its coordinating role.

Yet, for much of the nineteenth century, aesthetics held great (if indirect) sway over architectural thought in the German and Austrian lands, and overtly materialistic theories were always in danger of being accused of sober, dry, artless design which ignored the higher ideals of the architectural art. Most architectural theorists whom we have discussed accepted the legitimacy of the spiritual or ideal act. Alois Riegl's refutation of Semper on the grounds that he was a materialist is overblown. Semper himself assumed that ideas play the central role in architectural creation. In point of fact, atop Semper's materialist edifice, beauty was considered as the permeation of the sensual by the spiritual. It is thus tempting to suggest, as does Gurlitt, that the aesthetic philosophies of both

Bötticher and Semper were partially dependent on the aesthetic philosophy of Schelling and Hegel, which taught that the beauty of an artwork is based essentially in its spiritual contents.⁴⁹

An Aesthetics of Psychological Perception

It was not until the latter quarter of the nineteenth century, chiefly through the rise of psychological aesthetics, that the possibility of tangibly relating spiritual stimulation to materials became possible. The rise of psychological aesthetics provided legitimacy for the discipline of architecture on the basis of formal characteristics, and also led to a dynamic appreciation of the interplay of perception, space/form, and design. A history of the ideas leading to this phenomenon is contained in Johannes Volkelt's Der Symbol-Begriff in der neuesten Aesthetik (1876). As Volkelt, professor of aesthetics at Jena, Basel, Würzburg, and Leipzig, described the *Symbol-begriff*, beauty was no longer sought in empty, pure forms, but was understood through the content of the form as it is apprehended by the subject.⁵⁰ Action in the real world determined the appreciation of the visual arts. By content, however, Volkelt did not refer to a form's function in society, but rather to its colors, tones, lines, and surfaces. Generally speaking, we behold beauty as a consequence of the incremental emergence of the formal narratives of an object by the senses.

Unlike speculative aesthetics in the Kantian tradition, psychological aesthetics maintained that aesthetic judgment is acquired and not inherent; it is an active participant in the world. It held forth a visual world in interaction with the senses and the mind. By the 1880s, one encountered more and more a disapproval of speculative aesthetics by philosophers more inclined to the empirical and scientific. At German universities the speculative philosophies of the beautiful were increasingly replaced by psychological aesthetics.⁵¹ Where the latter differed from the former was in its attempt to understand

the physical relationship between the creation of pleasure in the mind and the form of objects in the world. Unlike the intangible workings of speculative perception, new theories of psychological perception strove to establish an empirical ground for aesthetic judgment.

These sentiments were voiced for an architectural audience by H. Schatteburg in 1888. Schatteburg's notion of aesthetic feeling was underscored by those investigations in physiology and psychology which focus on the eye and its capacity for the reproduction of images: *'Von der zeitweiligen Beschaffenheit der letzteren hängt wesentlich der Grad der Empfänglichkeit für ästhetische Gefühle ab.'*⁶² Following the tradition of psychological and physiological aesthetics, Schatteburg understood that the feeling for beauty is dependent upon eye movement, the pleasing or displeasing muscular exertion caused by following lines and forms.⁵³ Given the important role of the senses in apprehending beauty, Schatteburg later considered that the keys to an aesthetic sense are well developed sense organs. *"Je feiner das Nervengefühl des Menschen, desto feiner ist sein Geschmack."*⁶⁴ Likewise, in Das Problem der Form in der bildenden Kunst (1893), Adolf Hildebrand maintained that the perception and appreciation of an object is governed by the observer: the optical accommodation of lenses, the convergence of angles, and movements of the head. Through a combination of eye and head movements (which constitute kinesthetic perception) we are able to image three-dimensional form.⁵⁵ For Hildebrand, kinesthetic ideas arise and develop in connection with the outlines of an object.⁵⁶

It is likely that Schatteburg's and Hildebrand's observations were produced in conjunction with Adolf Göller's Zur Aesthetik der Architektur (1887) and Die Entstehung der architektonischen Stilformen (1888). Göller was encouraged to consider the succession of styles as a process dependent upon the changing attributes of vision, and claimed that the task of an aesthetic of architectural forms is the discovery of those psychological laws through which the feeling of beauty comes about.⁵⁷ This notion of the beauty of the pure

form is completely opposed to Hegel's aesthetic.⁵⁸ Göller's laws are normative, valid for all building styles, and refer, first, to the inborn human love for pure forms, and, second, to the human capacity to develop feeling for architectural forms over time. Correspondingly, the sources of forms are two-fold: 1) geometric, formal laws which emerge out of nature and daily life and possess universal validity; and 2) imitation of nature and other images in order that each *Gedächtnissbild* can be associated with earlier occurring forms.⁵⁹

Influenced by the research into psychological perception by Fiedler and Volkelt, Göller cast architecture as the decorative art of pure, visible forms.⁶⁰ Its beauty is achieved through the visual play of abstractions, lines, and geometries. Beauty in itself is meaningless, and derives its power from this unconceptualized perception of the course of the line, relationship of masses, play of light and shadows.

Schon im Früheren wurde nachgewiesen, dass bei den schmückenden Gebilden unser Wohlgefallen nicht oder nicht nur auf den erweckten Gedanken beruht, sondern dass der Reiz schon in der Form selber, als einer bedeutungslosen Vorstellung des Auges, enthalten sein muss.⁶¹

As a non-cognitive process, Göller's psychological aesthetics did not recognize Bötticher's concept of tectonic symbolism.⁶² Whereas ornamental forms which evolve historically are the basis for the latter, crucial to the former school are elementary geometric forms as the foundations of our formal intuition. Göller did not hesitate to claim that the pleasure inherent in meaningless forms lies in the fact that in them the consciousness of an especially great number of such formal laws is grasped. In other words, our idea of the whole takes in some of "*die vereinigten Gesetze*."⁶³

Idealization of construction was only a beginning, and Göller faulted Bötticher's claim that the Greeks had freely invented their decorative forms out of the essence of their constructive aspects. What is more likely, we are told, is that the Greeks, like all other peoples, took their forms from older peoples. The particular symbolic weight they bestowed upon these forms was thoroughly Greek. Nonetheless, Göller was convinced that more than one possible symbolism was possible for any determined static or spatial achievement.

As in language, where a concept corresponds to different sound rows, so in architecture different decorative forms arise out of the activity of the same constructive member. Moreover, one does not have to display structure and construction in order to create a beautiful architecture.

Memories are often much more important. So, alongside the capacity of humans to find beauty in pure forms lies the faculty of associative beauty. Göller followed Herbart's idea that feeling is based on the accumulation and association of prior representations. These memories are the residue which facilitate the second aspect of Göller's philosophy of architectural form, his notion of *Formgefühl*. Whether a person has a feeling for a style, a *Stilgefühl*, is a matter of exposure. Indeed, for Göller the feeling for forms and styles is thoroughly influenced by education and training, a long, gradual process during which the viewer or artist is made better acquainted with beautiful forms. Apprehension of new forms for the first time only rarely leads to a feeling of beauty. The beauty of forms is not an eternal value, "*ein eigener unveränderlicher Vorzug...sondern ein Werth, den unser Gedächtniss ihnen verleiht...*"⁶⁴ For these reasons, the shape and boundaries of *Formgefühl* are not prescribed for all time. Only psychological laws explain how our feeling relates to "*dem Verhältniss des Neuerscheindnden zu den Bildern des früher Geschauten in unserem Gedächtniss.*"⁶⁵

Göller was fond of saying that architects always design out of the contents of their mental picture gallery. Hence, a feeling for form is the result of experience. Feeling for beauty is dependent upon the retention of experiences, the notion of a *Gedächtnissbild*, or memory image: "*Das Formgefühl des Einzelnen ist abhängig von seinem Gedächtnissinhalt, das heisst von dem, was sein Gedächtniss an Bildern früher gesehener Formen aufbewahrt.*"⁶⁶ Each memory image is an essential ingredient in the development of a *Formgefühl*, in that it multiplies or changes the content of our memories. A *Gedächtnissbild* is not a single residue, but a chain of simple memory images. The more

complete the memory image, the greater our feeling of beauty. Thus we find Göller stressing that a sense for beauty can be enhanced by repeated viewing, long viewing, and a high degree of attentiveness.

The tension between our appreciation for pure forms and complex forms (composed from *Gedächtnissbilder*), is the cause of stylistic succession. Göller saw the progression of a style as the making complex its formal arrangements until a point at which they no longer make a bold formal statement. Seen historically, styles progress from an interest in symbolic forms to an appreciation of pure forms, and climax in the difficult understanding of highly-developed geometric forms. This historical path is characterized by the various transformations of forms, seen in: *Uebertragung; Umbildung; Verbindungen; or Combinationen*. Early in a style, pleasure in the play of lines and shadows is weaker than the symbolic meaning of the forms and value of the materials. Later this relationship is reversed, and we come to see the dominance of "*das rein formalen Reiz der Architektur*."⁶⁷ As the style exerts a greater hold on its culture, it comes to rely more on previous associations, on complex admixtures and decorative ploys. A style loses its hold on people, finally, where too many memory images compete for attention. Often in a highly decorative style the impulse for consideration is lost. Known as the *Gesetz der Ermüdung*, it is the principal reason for continual stylistic change: "*Die Ermüdung des Einzelnen im Wohlgefallen an der schönen Form mit dem Schärferwerden seines Gedächtnissbildes ist die Ursache der immerwährenden Stilveränderung in der Architektur*."⁶⁸

Pleasure in architecture is cyclical, which means that weakening of the *Formgefühl* is unavoidable. Depending upon which stage changes occur, certain permanent qualities are retained: "*Je früher in seiner Entwicklung der alte Stil aufhört, desto reicher ist er noch bei seinem Aufhören, desto mehr Formen übergibt er seinem Nachfolger, desto reicher ist dieser schon in seinem Anfang*."⁶⁹ The tiring of the feeling for form is essential for the progress of architecture, otherwise there would be eternal stagnation. Predictably, given

Göller's normative understanding of stylistic succession, the causes of stylistic decay contain within them the seeds of renewal; and the notion of *Neues zum Alten*. How is architecture renewed? Göller tells us that there are three principal ways: 1) new arrangements of masses (gables, towers, bays); 2) new combinations of decorative forms on the surface of the facade; 3) a return to old, reliable forms. Yet, while a completely new form can please by nature of its abstract geometric qualities, it does not reach the level of an old form. Thus in history, almost all new forms affiliate with earlier ones.⁷⁰

The idea of psychological aesthetics affirmed that there is an important connection between the mind's judgment of artistic forms and the routes to which those forms are apprehended by the senses over time. The Herbartian idea (developed further by Göller and others) that the judgment of beauty is determined by something akin to *Gewohnheitseindrücken* was shared by others by the first decade of the twentieth century. As Joseph August Lux wrote in 1909: "*Die modernen technischen Konstruktionen brauchen nur älter zu werden, um als schön zu gelten. Sie brauchen nur den Vorzug des Geburtsadels durch die Zeitalter zu erhalten, die ihnen die Ahnenreihe der Tradition verschafft.*"⁷¹ Likewise, in "Der Kampf um die Moderne" (1903) Feldegg denounced aesthetics as an absolute (or speculative) science, and refocused the discussion on beauty, as had Göller, to circumstances of actual perception in lived time. Looking in a different direction, and citing advances in anthropology, Feldegg characterized mankind as itself a constantly changing essence who forms new concepts of beauty in relation to a changed built environment:

Sobald wir aber inne werden, daß diese ganze Vorstellung eines Transcendent-Schönen, eines nicht in der Kunst selbst liegenden, sondern außerhalb ihr schwebenden Begriffes eine tolle Fiktion ist, sobald wir inne werden, daß, wie ich oben sagte, das Schöne bloß der psychische Niederschlag des Wirklichen, des Gewesenen oder doch des Gesetzten in der Kunst ist: dann können wir keinen Augenblick länger zweifeln, daß das Schöne ein historisch sich abwandelndes Etwas ist, das - und hier berühre ich wieder unser Hauptthema - nicht vor, sonder lange, ja lange nach dem Monumentalen in der Kunst entsteht.⁷²

Feldegg's main idea is that art cannot consist of an abstract desire to be beautiful: In art the beautiful is not the beginning, but the end.⁷³ Beauty, rather, is the result of what we have come to know, what lies behind us.

The Limits of Ornament

Aesthetic philosophy, whether speculative or psychological, reduced architectural essence to singular sets of imperatives. It chose to confine itself to either the inner sense of the mind or the outer sense embodied in a systemic relationship between the mind, sense organs, and real objects. But, what of the pluralistic nature of architectural production, the equation of artistic meaning (and ornament) with plan and structure? Claims for a unified style of design in the *Moderne*, while purporting theories of ornament, adopted after all the aesthetic dictate that the meaning of ornament grow out of perceptual relationships.

Of course, aesthetic philosophy had not drained architectural theory of its traditional reservoirs of knowledge. For some architectural theorists disgusted at the anarchic artistic conditions of their age, precariously balanced between pure philosophy and practical technology, a new (or traditional) theory of architectural beauty was called for. An artistic ground which aesthetic theories most often took for granted was the intricate relationship between the decoration and ornamentation of a building and its practical functions. In effect, the isolation of the aesthetic dimension in architecture from practical concerns - the injunction against purpose and raw requirements - blocked the development of aesthetic categories out of the contemporary building situation, and the consequent acceptance of a historically supplied system of ornamental forms.⁷⁴

Among many architects unenamored of the rude dismissal of architecture's practical side by philosophers, artistic considerations often still reigned supreme. Many theorists continued to accord ornament the prominence it had received since the Renaissance. As we saw among idealist theorists in Chapter Five, theories of ornament widely accepted that

the artistic embellishment of the functional aspects of building through decorative means was an act of the highest architectural significance. This point of view was represented by one of the most famous architectural decorators of nineteenth century Vienna, Eduard van der Nüll, professor of the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts after 1844, and partner with August Siccardsburg for the design of the Vienna Opera.⁷⁵

In his essay "Andeutungen über die kunstgemässe Beziehung des Ornaments zur rohen Form" (1845), van der Nüll interpreted decoration and ornament as a measure of civilization and the goal of all educated artists. Decoration for van der Nüll was not a luxury, but a necessity; it was a synonym for culture.⁷⁶ Yet, Van der Nüll's attention was not completely absorbed by the forms of ornament in themselves. The Viennese architect was also deeply concerned with the specific relations between construction and decoration, proposing that a new style of decoration was needed for the advanced technologies of the age. His idea of architecture maintained a logical organization of materials, and a scientific knowledge of cutting edge constructive technologies. Van der Nüll was explicit that the constructive scheme or predominant materials of a building should not be masked by decoration. Yet, while van der Nüll realized that every building that is beautiful must also be constructively functional, he also accepted the classicist dictum that functional objects are not works of art. The step from utility to art, most important for van der Nüll, required the simplification and ennoblement of constructive relations in decorative forms: *"die Gabe, den Zweck der durch den Verstand hervorgerufenen noch rohen Form näher zu bezeichnen, und durch den Schönheitssinn zu veredeln."*⁷⁷

Arguing against absolute proportional systems, van der Nüll accepted construction as architecture's metaphysical core. This idea, while sounding uniquely modern at first, was actually fully in keeping with the tenor of classical architectural theory. Van der Nüll, like Alberti, understood that architectural beauty was grounded upon the functional perfection of a built form, a whole composed of parts, yet complete in every respect.

Respecting this full notion of building, Alberti had envisioned ornament as a complement to such architectural beauty, possessing the character of something attached or added.⁷⁸

Similarly, van der Nüll appreciated ornament as a supplement, the very essence of the striving for architecture to emphasize the characteristic aspects of form. He wrote that the beauty derived from ornament should always follow an "*organische Bildung*," making these fundamental aspects of building more sensual and understandable to the viewer. Sounding very much like a follower of Alberti, van der Nüll added that decoration makes the combination of single parts into a whole more understandable, as the arbitrariness of forms is put within artistically determined bounds. "*Nur das Streben, nähere Beziehungen zum Leben kunstgemäß auszudrücken, kann die verständige Form adeln zum Kunstwerke, insbesondere in der Baukunst durch die Versinnlichung der wirkender Kräfte, an den Durchdringungspunkten, wo selbe in Gleichgewichte erhalten werden.*"⁷⁹ Far from presaging a revolutionary theory of the beauty of raw forms in themselves, van der Nüll's theory of ornament as the artistic supplement to functional building was a nineteenth century clarification of a centuries-old idea.

Defining the role of ornament in architecture was clearly a hotly contested issued during the nineteenth century. When one considers the plenitude of aesthetic and architectural theories of ornament and beauty which had newly emerged or been reinvigorated, it is not surprising that Loos would have found the whole situation stupefying. The concepts art, beauty, and ornament, were discursive battlegrounds. As the opposition of Loos and others to the *Moderne* made evident, much of architectural culture was not able to digest the rewriting of design by philosophers of aesthetics. Nor were all theorists necessarily ready to accept the architectural principles of Antiquity or the Renaissance, those put forth by van der Nüll. By focusing on the ornamental side of architecture, theories of architecture as art - whether of the surface and the line, as in *Moderne*, or of monumental masses, as in the case of the Renaissance and Baroque revivals

- were bound to ignore the use value of architecture, its functional consequences for human society.⁸⁰ Ruminations on the dramatic tension between psychological ideas and forms or constructive realities and ornament rarely began to describe the relevance of architecture for industrial society.

Because of the discursive need either to explain away or support the additive nature of ornament, it became Adolf Loos's touchstone for the damage that artistic thinking could cause to design. By linking ornament with artistic thought, Loos developed a logic which governed all interactions between ornament and design. Ornament came to embody those superfluous and vulgar considerations which robbed an object of its rightful form. As he contended in perhaps his most famous essay, "Ornament und Verbrechen" (approximately 1910), ornament has no connections whatsoever with a healthy cultural disposition, and he was convinced: "*Daß es den menschen schwer an der gesundheit, am nationalvermögen und also in seiner kulturellen entwicklung schädigt.*"⁸¹ In "Architektur" (1909), Loos made clear that the cultural progress of mankind, a gradual alteration of perception, has led to a new perspective on ornament within design. Cultural evolution leads away from ornament: "*der weg der kultur ist ein weg vom ornament zur ornamentlosigkeit!*" and that "*Evolution der kultur ist gleichbedeutend mit dem entfernen des ornamentes aus dem gebrauchsgegenstände.*"⁸²

Loos called ornament a plague on modern life. But, although he may have expressed these sentiments more bluntly than others, he was far from the only architect or writer of his time to express them. If we look closely at the threads of discourse on ornament during the nineteenth century, affinities surfaced which would become decisive for Loos's attitude toward both art and ornament in regard to architecture. For, after all, the displacement of ornament from the forefront of architectural creation was an affair of the nineteenth century. Before 1800, a statement in the German-speaking lands that architects attach great importance to ornament would have been a tautology. It would not

remain so for long. As the nineteenth century unfolded, engineering and utilitarian building made ever clearer the distinction between the necessary and the contingent. Architectural ornament was isolated from new structural advances and misunderstood for the numerous new building types then emerging.

If it was true that a materialist thinker like Heinrich Hübsch accepted the decoration of buildings according to the imagination of an individual artist, it was also the case that Hübsch believed that the conformity of ornament to needs and comfort would ameliorate the subjective artistic aims of the artist: *"In jedem Falle werden die Gebäude, welche selbst mit den unglücklichsten Verzierungen begabt, aber in Betreff der Element consequent gestaltet sind, als Kunstwerte viel höher stehen, als die getreusten Nachahmungen der Antike."*⁸³ Reverberating the earlier contentions of Cordemoy and Laugier, Hübsch, insisted that the 'purely decorative' Hellenistic half-columns were the first great lie in architecture.⁸⁴ His emphasis on the materialistic aspects of architecture was a repudiation of the aesthetic tradition in German philosophy. Hübsch's rejection of false ornament also clearly influenced Bötticher, who, because of his strong belief in the necessity for the *Kunstform* to develop in complete harmony with an appropriate static system, also saw the widespread use of Greek ornament on arches and vaults as a great lie.⁸⁵ Still, unlike Hübsch's materialism, Bötticher in the end relied on aesthetic criteria much like those of the philosopher Schelling, both arguing for the decorative symbolization of function.⁸⁶

If we are to believe the structural materialists, the rise of new constructive systems always displaced existing ornamental systems. Ludwig Pfau, in adopting such a position, considered materials and function to be of primary importance:

im allgemeinen jedoch ist so viel festzustellen, daß die Einheit der Konzeption und Gruppierung, die offene Darlegung und Verkörperung des Zwecks, und die dem Material entsprechende Konstruktion die Grundbedingungen jeder ästhetischen Gestaltung sind.⁸⁷

Pfau's plea for functional expression in architecture emerged in part from his reaction to the cheap ornamental decorations made possible by factory production. His opposition to concealing constructive materials went hand in hand with his desire to see the true purpose of a building left apparent. For architects to take hold of the building process in its entirety, Pfau felt it necessary to tame those products produced outside the construction site. Ornament, disembodied from architecture by virtue of its production in factories, should only be used as the continuation of an existing architectural organization, used to express it more clearly: *"sie markirt die Hauptlinien, begrenzt und vermittelt die Hauptmassen, und deutet die größere oder kleinere Wichtigkeit der einzelnen Theile durch Kräftige oder zartere Formen, durch Mehrung oder Minderung des Schmuckes an."*⁶⁸ Concerning the genesis of building design, ornament is a secondary, and frequently destructive concern.

Ornament and Social Evolution

If not thought of as superfluous during the first two-thirds of the century, architectural ornament was at least challenged for its relevance to the dominant structural and material systems of a building. Far from being the essence of a building's character, as was widely understood to be the case in the eighteenth century, ornament had become a crowning of constructive forms. Moreover, its role in the historical development of architecture was put into serious question. In response to this problematic, architectural theorists took on the task of precisely elaborating the relationship of ornament to the material attributes of a building. Given the dominant ideas of evolution and linear historical development, it became imperative to explain ornament within an evolutionary scheme. Even theorists of a more idealistic bent labored to prove each ornamental detail as the outgrowth of a complex interrelationship between it and a building's evolving social uses.

During the last third of the century, Semper's theory of *Bekleidungswesen* became a leading explanation for the origins and development of ornament in architecture. Due to his belief in the origin of both ornament and wall-systems in the textile art, Semper suggested a bond between structure and ornament; architecture develops from a point at which the worlds of constructive and decorative forms are indivisible. As we have discussed in Chapter Five, Semper understood ornamental urges as wholly synonymous with functional requirements in primitive society. Ornament neither emerges from structure nor is unrelated to surface decoration. The integrative ingenuity of Semper's writings on ornament came from his assessment that ornament evolves in conjunction with structure as essential aspects of building activity.

Semper's historiography of architecture treated the evolution of ornamental forms as contingent with material progress. Modern types of ornament therefore are wholly consistent with modern social conditions. This investment of building with a holistic mantle of decoration was likely a response to both materialist theories within architectural discourse and aesthetic theories by philosophers. In the latter case, what gave Semper's theory validity in regard to the philosophical interdiction on architectural representation was his bias against regarding ornament as an imitation of nature. Semper did not want building ornament understood as an aesthetic accretion foreign to the nature of architecture, but as an activity integral to the constructive architectural consciousness. Thus, it may be that in response to a philosophical idea of architecture as decorated mass, he espoused an ornamental consciousness shaped by the binding, joining, and tying functions of enclosing spatial elements. Whatever the case, for subsequent architectural theory, Semper's ideas provided a functional frame of reference for ornament.⁶⁹

In the aftermath of Semper, architectural theorists increasingly explained ornament within the context of historical development. Decorative practices were measured by the dynamic reality of the building in society. If Gustav Ebe's "Versuche in

moderner Bau-Ornamentik" (1902) sought to frame the ornamental quest through natural metaphors, he also warned against literally depicting nature; and inveighed against the preponderance of ornamented parts which the uncritical copying of the Baroque brought about.⁹⁰ By contrast, Ebe understood architectural ornament as much more the partial abstraction of nature's forms for particularly architectural purposes. Sounding like Bötticher by the end, Ebe wrote of ornament: "*als Symbol einer Idee oder als Verkörperung für den Ausdruck des Spieles statischer Kräfte erschöpfend dienen zu können.*"⁹¹ Judging the acanthus and lotus as such perfect abstractions, he advocated an analogous abstract ornamentation of simple forms on the English model for modern architecture.

Earlier, in "Ueber der Begriff der Baukunst" (1877), Rudolf Redtenbacher referred to the complementary aspects of ornament and construction within the historical development of architecture. Like his teacher Semper, Redtenbacher wrote that decoration should match the purpose of the building, progressing in form to relate to changing demands on society and the individual. Aesthetic relations are not mere mathematical formulae.⁹² Yet, Redtenbacher's words also reveal an inclination to recognize a more autonomous ornamental impulse. As he regarded it, decoration is as important to many as clothing or nourishment: "*Der Sinn, der zuerst dem Schmücken zu Grunde lag, war der, eine hervorragende Persönlichkeit von Anderen auszuzeichnen.*"⁹³ In this manner, Redtenbacher's notion of ornamental purpose was motivated by ideals, if not proportions. The spiritual content of a building was understood as a determinate force for uniting constructive and decorative aspects.

Dieser geistiger Inhalt bestimmt die Künstlerische Gesamterscheinung der Bauwerke, ihren Habitus, ihr reicheres oder einfacheres Aussehen, ihren würdevollen oder festlich prunkender Charakter. Er Entscheidet nicht nur über das Mass der Decoration, sondern auch über die Qualität derselben, er beherrscht die Auswahl über die decorativen Hilfsmittel.⁹⁴

This understanding of ornament as an essential and progressive element of architectural development was influential up through the 1890s. Redtenbacher had

discussed ornament, as Semper had, as an integral condition of early man's cultural development: *"Die ursprünglichen Vorstellungen von Schreiben knüpfen sich an ein Einrißen der Haut, tätowiren."*⁹⁶ Ferdinand Ritter von Feldegg was one of many architectural theorists who later grasped this understanding of ornament as originating in primitive human culture, and like Semper and Redtenbacher saw the impulse to decorate as a natural condition of man:

Das Ausschmücken und Verzieren jedweden menschlichen Erzeugnisses, gleichgiltig, welchem Zwecke dasselbe dient, scheint auf einen natürlichen Bedürfnisse, einer Art ursprünglichen Naturtriebes zu beruhen, denn wir finden Zierrate an den primitiven Producten ganz roher Naturvölker, welchen die Absicht, als Ausschmückung zu dienen, ganz unverkennbar in dem gleichen Maße zugrunde liegt, als den vollendeten Werken einer hoch entwickelten Zeit.⁹⁶

What is beginning to be lost in both Redtenbacher's and Feldegg's texts, however, is Semper's holistic tie between ornament and construction. In their glorification of ornament, the impulse to ornament is less related to material realities.

By the time we reach H. Schatteburg's article, "Die Ornament und die Farbe" (1891), amidst the assertions of the elemental importance of ornament to architecture is the unveiled theme of ornament's additive nature. To be sure, Schatteburg wrote of the instinctive and evolutionary aspects of ornament: *"Der Hang zur Verzierung ist jedem Volke als Instinkt gleichsam eigen und nimmt mit dem Fortschritte der Cultur zu."*⁹⁷ Yet, we are also told, ornament is vital for the elevating and enlivening of architecture. The significant facts relating to ornamental use in building design are described by Schatteburg as three-fold: 1) it completed and animated empty, lifeless surfaces which lie between architectural members; 2) it combined different architectural parts into a whole; and 3) it clarified single architectural parts with regard to their symbolic activity.⁹⁸ The dialectics of the architectural discourse had produced a synthesis between idealist stylization and an evolutionary building urge.

Despite intricate theoretical explanations of the embeddedness of ornament in building, as the century neared an end, it became rhetorically difficult to sustain arguments for the organic relationship of ornament to the historical development of modern society. If writers had reacted strongly to the first machine products over half a century earlier, the reaction to the profusion of industrial goods in the 1890s became intense. The mass production of decorative features for even the most common buildings shook up Western culture's sense of propriety. Due to its relentless exposure, any aura that ornament retained earlier in the century was lost by its end. On the streets of German and Austrian cities developers and architects poured out an outrageous collection of historicist facades, each seemingly trying to outstrip the other in terms of originality.

Describing conditions of boundless individualism in "Alte Formen-neuer Stil" (1889), Cornelius Gurlitt decried the pretensions of the middle class in wanting to live like nobles. Gurlitt, questioning whether the use of ornamental forms by the middle class has any relevance for the historical content of these forms, asked whether such design arises according to the whims of individuals.

Es ist den größte Irrthum der modernen Architektur, dass sie nich Maass und Ziel, kein Gefühl für das Schickliche hat, dass sie nicht erkennt, der Reichthum gehöre nicht überall in, dass sie sich alle Trümpfe aus der Hand giebt, wenn sie jedes Geschäftshaus mit den von alles Fürstenschlössern zusammen gesuchten Formen überladet und kann nicht weiß, wie sie im Schloss vor der Fabrik-Niederlage des Herrn Kommerzienrath so und so auszeichnen soll.⁹⁹

Almost a decade before Loos, Gurlitt recognized the actual practice of ornamentation as fashion and crass commercialism. He decried the fact that despite theoretical pretensions, ornamental forms were now created not to express inner functions, crown structural joints, or accomplish external climactic needs, but merely to artistically create a play of light and shadows.

These difficulties were also foreseen by Richard Streiter in his "Architektonische Zeitfragen." Whereas healthy development of ornament is gradual, Streiter saw that this

is not possible in today's commercial culture.¹⁰⁰ For all its identification with modern man, Streiter laid great blame for eclectic ornament on the incredibly fast pace of industry. As a result, the continuing whirl of changing fashion currents did not emanate from the desires and needs of the public, but corresponded to the market speculation of businesses, never permitted to stand still.¹⁰¹ For both architecture and the applied arts, ornament had become a wild beast in need of taming. In 1893, Peter Jessen made a plea to limit the use of ornament: *"das Ornament soll sich der Stelle, an der es verwendet wird, und der Technik des Stoffes anpassen; es soll im Verhältnis stehen zur Umgebung und in sich selbst; es soll gefällig sein in Form und Farbe und soll möglichst auch einer sinnvollen Bezug haben."*¹⁰²

On a philosophical level, the urge to ornament was challenged as never before. For the American social theorist Thorstein Veblen, the explosion in ornamentation was a sign of the extension of the values of conspicuous waste from the upper classes to the middle and lower classes. As described in The Theory of the Leisure Class (1899), the enculturation of mass produced objects by ornament was only a seeming identity. It was really the sign of the identification of previously useful objects with the values of the leisure class. The values of leisure are derived from the notion that one's time has been spent unproductively. Hence, all ornamentation, as a purposive display of wasteful expenditure, contradicted functional purpose. On a strict economic argument, Veblen wrote that the "beauty of the object - is best served by...the efficiency for the material ends of life...the simple and unadorned article is aesthetically the best."¹⁰³ Yet, for Veblen ornament was the visible price-tag of a building's costliness, benefitting the social needs of invidious comparison. It signified that its inhabitants had enough money to waste on superfluous things. As for the state of architecture amidst these occurrences, Veblen wrote:

The endless variety of fronts presented by the better class of tenements and apartment houses in our cities is an endless variety of architectural distress and of suggestions of expensive discomfort. Considered as objects of beauty,

the dead walls of the sides and backs of these structures, left untouched by the hands of the artist, are commonly the best feature of the building.¹⁰⁴

Overall, as efforts to restrict domestic decoration were becoming more difficult, writing on ornament took on a more prohibitive character. Adolf Loos, of course, is famous as the slayer of ornament. From his earliest writings, he boldly renounced the bulk of architectural theory written over the past thirty years which supported the presence of ornament in architecture. At first, his attack was directed at the discourse which maintained that architectural ornament was a natural outgrowth of historical building processes. Only later would he strike close to Veblen's notion of ornament as the utter contradiction of function.

In "Das Luxusfuhrwerk" (1898), Loos embarked upon what he felt was a corrective account of ornament and social progress. By essentially reversing the progression of ornament's rise with civilization, Loos first described the fall of ornament as a basic thread within the evolution from savage to civilized man. Accordingly, in man's primitive state, symbolic displacements and the syntaxes of ornamental languages consume the essence of form:

The lower the cultural level of a people, the more extravagant it is with its ornament, its decoration. The Indian covers every object...with layer upon layer of ornament. To see decoration as a sign of superiority means to stand at the level of the Indians. But we must overcome the Indian in us...To seek beauty only in form and not in ornament is the goal toward which all humanity is striving.¹⁰⁵

A review that Loos wrote a little over a month later, "Damenmode" (1898), continued these thoughts, and translated the social-class relationship to one whose evolutionary scheme is based upon the exclusion of ornament. In a key passage, Loos made his first analogy between the primitive who ornaments himself and the criminal, contrasting how the progressive development of culture in the nineteenth century has gradually overcome those ornamental devices which find their origins in the primitive: "*Der papua und der verbrecher ornamentiert seine haut. Der indianer bedeckt sein ruder und sein boat über*

und über mit ornamenten. Aber das bicycle und die dampfmaschine sind ornamentfrei. Die Fortschreitende Kultur scheidet objekt für objekt vom ornamentiertwerden aus."¹⁰⁶

Loos's contrast between the primitive and civilized man is striking, and implied the autonomization of ornament. In his texts, the concept "civilized" is defined in opposition to that of the "primitive": the savage ornaments while civilized man does not. This position cut against the grain of architectural theory since Semper, which maintained a historical progression of ornament alongside societal development. Loos's reversal of the status of ornament within architectural development was likely influenced by theories of anthropology since the Enlightenment which stressed the idea of rational progress.¹⁰⁷

The view of history as the progressive revelation of reason, of course, was most forthrightly stated by the Marquis de Condorcet's Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind (1793-94). Here Condorcet rejected Rousseau's enshrinement of nature, and argued for a society based upon science and rational thought.

This association of modernity with the complex development of systems of reason continued during the nineteenth century. In the Principles of Sociology (1876-96), Herbert Spencer's law of evolution described progress in the direction of greater complexity: "a change from a state of relatively indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a state of relatively definite, coherent heterogeneity."¹⁰⁸ Clearly, the simple savage of the eighteenth century was no longer held in great esteem by the second half of the nineteenth century.

Describing the rudeness of early mankind in Ancient Society (1877), Lewis Morgan characterized the gradual evolution of mental and moral powers through experience and protracted struggle on the path to civilization.¹⁰⁹ Morgan went on to renounce the theory of moral degradation from the savage as no longer tenable, attributing it as a corollary of an out-dated Mosaic cosmogony. Recognizing all stages of social evolution present in the contemporary world, Morgan related that society developed instead from savagery

(Australians, Polynesians) to barbarism (American Indians), and finally culminated in civilization (Greece and Rome).¹¹⁰

In Primitive Culture (1874), one of the founders of the science of modern anthropology, Edward Tylor reiterated these general ideas on the passage of human society from a state of savagery to civilization. He even mentioned Papuans specifically as savages. In regard to Loos's theory of ornament, Tylor's theory may be particularly relevant. His insight into the evolutionary process established the notion that vestiges of primitive practices often survive into later stages of culture. Describing his theory of survivals in culture, Tylor wrote: "When a custom, an art, or an opinion is fairly started in the world, disturbing influences may long affect it so slightly that it may keep its course from generation to generation, as a stream once settled in its bed will flow on for ages."¹¹¹ In these survivals, which could easily describe Loos's view of ornament in architecture, original meanings die out, leaving an old practice increasingly estranged from society: "meaningless customs must be survivals, that they had a practical, or at least ceremonial, intention when and where they first arose, but are now fallen into absurdity from having been carried on into a new state of society, where their original sense has been discarded."¹¹² Tylor's "survivals", like Loos's "ornament", correspond to outdated superstitions outliving their cultural age.

No doubt, this reduction of primitive traits to the archaic source for complex development toward civilization made an activity like tattooing appear crude. As Stephan Oettermann writes about the increasingly negative portrayal of tattooing in the late nineteenth century:

Der Sprache nicht mächtig, um sich selbst zu artikulieren, reklamierten die Tätowierten mit ihren bunten Bildern aus der Südsee auf der Haut immer wieder das Leben, das sie verloren hatten, oder das sie sich erträumten - das (irdische) Paradies, das ihnen verheißen war. Der Diskurs der Mächtigen dagegen versuchte, so lautstark als möglich diesen Protest der Tätowierung zu diffamieren und die Träger dieser Proteste über die Grenze ins Kriminelle abzuschieben, wo sie, so stigmatisiert, 'klassifizierbar',

zumindest aber als die 'Anderen' erkennbar waren und notfalls auch von den Ordnungsbehörden unschädlich gemacht werden konnten.¹¹³

In light of these developments, Loos's imagination was captured by a world free from primitive values: free from tattooing and ornament, and characterized by a rational and practical expression in the arts and crafts. In an optimistic note in 1898, Loos noted that when architects begin to confront the actual demands of their times, they will realize their civilized essence. The completely superfluous symbols of ornamental details will disappear: *"Der Architekt wird mehr am bau arbeiten, er wird erst nach fertigstellung des raumes and nach der feststellung seiner beleuchtung aut sein decorative ausschmückung bedacht nehmen."*¹¹⁴

A World Free of Ornament

In increasing measure - although expressed less vociferously - Loos's contemporaries in the first decade of the twentieth century became critical of the ethereal world of ornament in building. Acceptance of the new architectural metaphors of space, industry, and iron increasingly marginalized the symbolic need to decorate. In "Gedanken über die moderne Architektur" (1902) Heinrich Pudor described the main principle of architecture as the organization of space. Writing that the facade should be constructed and not decorated, Pudor lamented the continued predominance of Baroque tendencies: *"Das eigentliche architektonische Empfinden, das aus dem Raume herausgestalten, steht immer noch im Hintergrund, und damit in Übereinstimmung, wird auf das Dekorative der Nachdruck gelegt, und die Linie spielt auch in der modernen Architektur eine bedeutende Rolle."*¹¹⁵ In 1902, Hermann Muthesius commented that as people find locomotives and hanging bridges beautiful, they will change their attitudes on applied ornament in architectural matters. *"Hand in Hand damit geht eine zunehmende Abneigung gegen Ornament, gegen unsachlichen Formenaufwand, gegen Schmuck überhaupt, Dinge, gegen die alte Kunst nicht einzuwenden hatte."*¹¹⁶

As we observed earlier, until the close of the first decade of the twentieth century, Loos was ambivalent about art, and was quite divided about what the role of art in architecture should be. His synthesis of his thoughts on the relationship between art and architecture had not yet come to a head. On the one hand, many of his essays were directed against the deleterious influence of the art academies, historic styles, new artistic movements, and, of course, ornament. On the other hand, Loos had earlier degraded architects for not being pure artists, for not independently pursuing their artistic visions. Like Gurlitt, the demands of daily life, which are supposed to direct the activity of the architect, were presented by Loos as chaining the architect to commercial demands.

It is significant that "Die Überflüssigen," written by Loos about the *Deutscher Werkbund* in 1908, was his first full exposition of his opposition to the artistic principle in architecture and the applied arts. Here, the concept of ornament, if that means the added-on signification of the imagination and subjective feeling, became an imposter in the world of functional things, and especially the practice of the practical arts. Throughout his writings, Loos was deeply aware of public attitudes about art, and so he began by stating that: "To the modern man art is a high goddess, and he feels it as an assassination of art if one prostitutes it for objects of everyday use."¹¹⁷ This statement is not entirely ironic, and it is very likely that Loos felt that applied artists like Hoffmann and van de Velde were degrading art by mutilating its idea on the forms of objects of daily use. Loos's call for the eradication of applied artists can be taken to be directed to both the salvation of the fine and practical arts. Loos went on to state the matter:

Clearly, the cultivated products of our time have no connection with art. The barbaric times in which art was mixed up with objects of daily use are finally over. To the salvation of art. If the twentieth century will be one time a great chapter in the history of humanity; to it we owe the great deed to bring about the separation of art and the crafts.¹¹⁸

In referring to "cultivated products", it is clear that Loos was not degrading art, but recognizing craft as a different - but equally valid - expression of a culture at a given time.

In this way, craft products, removed from the superfluous existence of the art academy or *Werkstatt*, can reassume their role in society as representatives of the style of modern life. After all, Loos went on to say: "They (the crafts) are so much of our time that we don't stop to consider that they are styleful."¹¹⁹ To the contrary, the applied arts, those bastard mixtures of art and craft, cannot hope to represent society in this way.

Loos's theory required, as we know in aftermath, the inevitable separation of art from the productions of daily life. Art in the twentieth century was distinctive from what it was in earlier times. As we mentioned above, Loos's evolutionary theory of art embodied the notion that the decoration of objects of daily use was the beginning of art.¹²⁰ At that time, he reminds us, the *papuaneger* covered his complete household with ornament. Yet, Loos believed that the history of mankind shows us that artistic development is a gradual liberation from this type of profanation, an emancipation of art from objects of daily use and "*gewerbliche erzeugnisse*."¹²¹ Rephrasing his statements of 1898, Loos wrote: "are we enemies of art because we want to separate it from handwork?"¹²² Just as the eighteenth century liberated science from art, so must the twentieth century liberate craft from art.

As we have stressed throughout, Loos was neither the first nor only architectural theorist to pose the antinomy in the relations among artistic intentions and realistic design as incapable of resolution. Because of persistent wavering between the material and spiritual aspects of design, architectural theorists had increasingly come to accept a split in architecture's essence. One such attempt, Karl Scheffler's *Moderne Baukunst* (1907), divided architecture into practical and ideal spheres; functional design alongside an academic science of styles. Since both types of design express different purposes, there are two types of functionalism in architecture, symbolic and utilitarian: "*In der Kunst betont der aufs utilitaristische gerichtete Zweckgedanke das naturalistisch Stoffliche, während der Zwecksinn des idealen Erkenntniswillens die schöne Stilform produziert*."¹²³ As far as

Scheffler was concerned, architecture, as an applied art, partakes in both sober utilitarianism and ideal striving after knowledge:

In der Baukunst ist es eine profane oder ideale Zweckmässigkeitsidee, die am Kunstgenuss teilnimmt. Was wir vor alten Bauwerken historische Stimmung nennen, was uns dort so entscheidend berührt, ist die Erkenntnis, oder doch der Instinkt, dass materielle und geistige Bedürfnisse restlos Form geworden sind, dass sich ein Charakter, ein Wille, eine Selbstherrlichkeit architektonische verkörpert hat. Von Profanbauten erkennen wir ein Stück sozialer Wirklichkeit und Lebenskultur, eine Spiegelung der Sitten und Lebensformen und vor repräsentativen Monumentalbauten spricht der aufs Ideale gerichtete Sinn, das Temperament ganzer Gemeinschaften zu uns.¹²⁴

Unlike Loos, Scheffler frequently repeated that the practical sphere of design furnished aesthetic enjoyment: Where there is necessity, there is also beauty. He thus considered all architectural endeavors to possess ingredients of artistry and function.

Still, Scheffler divided architecture, much as did Loos, into *Nutzbau* and *Monumentalarchitektur*. Although they share characteristics, a fixed boundary stretches between profane and monumental design. The reason that the visibility of this boundary is not immediately apparent is because we are in a time of decay, "*wenn die Produktivkraft versiegt und die Schönheitsformen ihrer ethischen Bedeutung entkleidet, dem ästhetischen Spieltrieb der Allgemeinheit freigegeben sind.*"¹²⁵ Certain buildings - notably factories and mass housing - are built from the inside to outside to satisfy predominant functional needs. They most often possess an irregular ground plan and elevation. Others such as churches and palaces are subordinated to an ideal of beauty and accentuate regularity and symmetry. "*Nie geht das zweckvoll Nützliche, das naturalistisch Charakteristische mit dem zwecklosen Schönen zusammen. Es sind zwei Welten.*"¹²⁶

Profane architecture (or *Nutzbau*), like speech, is living, and its forms must reflect needs of the living. In these cases, the prior consideration of artistic symbolism is not relevant. "*Das ästhetische Empfinden persönliches Künstler bedeutet sehr wenig; die allgemeine Norm, wie sie aus tausend heterogenen Einflüssen bildet, behält schliesslich Recht.*" The city apartment, accordingly, has little in common with the noble houses of the

17th century, and applying the facade of the latter to the former does little service to the cause of utility or art.¹²⁷ Like all profane buildings, the apartment house needs no ornament, requiring decoration only in so far as it naturally emerges from the materials and constructive methods.¹²⁸ At all costs, Scheffler argued, screwed-on consoles and cartouches, plaster gods, balustrades and lion's heads should be avoided.

Soon after the publication of Scheffler's book, Loos wrote his most famous essay, "Ornament und Verbrechen" (1908). Here he repeated and expanded details of his decade-long arguments against ornament in the practical arts and architecture. Again, as before, we are reminded of the origins and exclusivity of ornament to primitive art: *"Der drang, sein gesicht und alles, was einem erreichbar ist, zu ornamentieren, ist der uranfng der bildenden kunst. Es ist das lallen (babbling) der malerei."*¹²⁹ Repeating a favorite theme, Loos described human history as an evolutionary process, one whose progress is *"gleichbedeutung mit dem entfernen des ornamenten aus dem gebrauchsgenstande."*¹³⁰ Since different codes of conduct govern the evolutionary stages of societies, modern people have a different outlook than their predecessors. What was once accepted in human history is often no longer correct in advanced stages of evolution. The Papuan can tattoo his skin while modern man cannot.¹³¹ Loos made it clear that a man of our time who ornaments himself or his dwelling is estranged from his own society. More forcefully, he now wrote that *"der mensch unserer zeit, der aus innerem drange die waende mit erotischen symbolen beschmiert, ist ein verbrecher oder ein degenerierter."*¹³²

A few observations should be made on Loos's theory of architectural evolution. We can say immediately that art and general culture occupy different spheres. General culture encompassed the practical arts, and for the architect the task of design entailed cleansing human objects from their saturation in archaic symbolism. In order to do so man must first be liberated from his primitive impulses. One of these is the will to ornament. Cultural development therefore necessitates a reduction of the will to ornament. The will

to ornament only exists where there are lower, or non-existent cultural standards. As cultural standards grow, civilization unfolds, and ornamentation recedes. This emphasis placed on cultural standards throws Loos into confrontation with most design of the nineteenth century. In light of the anarchy of cultural codes which emerged during that time, Loos's strenuous calls for cultural vigilance, and his acrid attacks on ornament were understandably harsh.

For Michael Müller in his Die Verdrängung des Ornaments (1977), Loos's acceptance of the significance of cultural standards for everyday human behavior is analogous to Sigmund Freud's equation of free individuality with the primitive. For both architect and psychologist, the civilizing process can be characterized as *"die soziale bedingte Relativierung der Individualität."*¹³³ Müller believes that Loos, like Freud, understood the suppression of human impulses as part of the civilizing process. If Freud saw the imagination in adults as the outcome of the denial of pleasure, so did Loos: *"Seine erotischen Ornamentgebilde stoßen Loos ab, er 'verabscheut' sie und empfindet bei ihrem Anblick keine lustgefühle mehr."*¹³⁴

Loos's longstanding conviction that England was more civilized than Austria may have emerged from such theories. Like many of his contemporaries, Loos contended that, in comparison with practical-minded England, Austria had been doing itself a great disservice by continuing to ornament its products. Nonetheless, the understanding in Austria and Germany of English sobriety in matters of decoration often came from different principles. In Das Englische Haus, Robert Dohme anticipated Loos by emphasizing that the understanding of beauty's manifestations indicates the level of a culture. The more educated the people, as he believed the English were, the more discriminating their taste will be. Furthermore, for Dohme a refined taste at the same time limits itself and casts off in growing measure the mass of archaic artistic means. It does not decorate anymore.¹³⁵ Yet, Dohme also found that because of their heightened sense of common sense, the

English are able to immerse themselves within the needs of the individual. This elevated sense of individuality creates a level of artistic taste that is different from the Germans. Unlike Freud therefore Dohme understood the path to civilization as the progressive development of individual freedom and taste, the liberation of the middle classes from the fetters of tradition.

Loos's principles for the evolution of culture do not call for the negation of individual desires. His strong beliefs in the English tradition, and the singular achievements of the great architects of the past disprove simple acceptance of this notion. Yet, Loos's arguments about cultural evolution speak solidly to the need for the individual to conform to society. His vision, therefore, while strongly indebted to his English and American experiences, is thoroughly continental at heart; overall, it is with the collective that his stated sympathies lie. As an Austrian, Loos regarded the sensibility of decorating as damaging to the cultural development of the nation at large, as it leads as well to widespread spiritual and economic impoverishment. Loos's argument against ornament was often argued from a collective standpoint: *"Da das ornament nicht mehr organische mit unserer kultur zusammenhängt, ist es auch nicht mehr der ausdrück unserer kultur."*¹³⁶

At times, Loos's belief in the innate powers of a culture to right its wrongs is almost mystical. Despite what he saw as the Austrian state's continual attempts to retard cultural evolution, Loos was convinced that the contemporary rear-guard battle to reintroduce ornament to design was doomed to failure. The immense destruction wrought by aesthetic developments in the preceding decades, and the revival of all manner of decoration, could be easily overcome wrote Loos, since no one *"Kann die evolution der menschheit aufhalten."*¹³⁷ Indeed, the modern ornamentalist was equated by Loos with those fashion-mongers who constantly change their taste. Loos was supremely confident that he would lose his nerve eventually, and *"seine produkte werden schon nach drei jahren von ihm selbst verleugnet."*¹³⁸

Loos did not hesitate to attribute the extraordinary greatness of contemporary society to an inability to produce a new form of ornamentation, writing such ringing manifestoes as: "*Ornamentlosigkeit ist ein zeichnen geistiger kraft*,"¹³⁹ and "*Das moderne ornament hat keine eltern und keine nachkommen, keine vergangenheit und keine zukunft*."¹⁴⁰ The true future of design, for Loos, was to be the creation of ornamentless coiffures, rooms and cities. This ornamentless scheme is based upon the aforementioned fact that human evolution leads to an increasing pleasure in smooth, unadorned objects.¹⁴¹ When the "slavery of ornament" is finally shaken off, uttered Loos, "*Bald werden die straßen der städte wie weiße mauern glänzen*."¹⁴²

In "Architektur" (1909) Loos stated his clearest and most zealous theory of the false connection between art and architecture. It now became crystalline for him to disassociate the future architect who serves the community and no one else from the artist who serves only himself.¹⁴³ Most crucial in this decision, was Loos's ever more radical judgment of art, placing it in an all too austere position. As opposed to the design for useful objects, art makes its way into the world independent of need. Hence it is responsible to no one. Through this radical judgement of art, Loos virtually eliminated any common characteristics between it and architecture. The state of affairs had become black and white, and Loos wanted to avoid any ambiguity when he wrote:

Das kunstwerk will die menschen aus ihrer bequemlichkeit reißen. Das haus hat der bequemlichkeit zu dienen. Das kunstwerk ist revolutionär, das haus konservativ. Das kunstwerk weist der menschheit neue wege und denkt an die zukunft. Das haus denkt an die gegenwart. Der mensch liebt alles, was seine bequemlichkeit dient. Er haßt alles, was ihn aus seiner gewonnen und gesicherten position reißen will und belästigt.¹⁴⁴

In an essay almost two decades earlier, "Die bürgerliche Baukunst" (1892), Karl Henrici had already defined the cleavage between these two halves of the architectural mind. Henrici's judgments about the subordination of architecture to function remarkably prefigure Loos's reluctance to allow an intimacy between architecture and free art.

Moreover, Henrici revealed that outside of graves and other monuments of ideal design, architecture should fancy practical considerations:

Die Architektur, insbesondere die bürgerliche, ist und bleibt eine dienende Kunst, dienend irgend welchen Zwecken, die ausserhalb ihren selbst liegen, und ihre Schönheit kann niemals ganz frei erfunden, aufgefasst und beurteilt werden, sondern nur noch nach dem Masse ihrer Zweckerfüllung.¹⁴⁶

Where Henrici acknowledged that architecture must only rarely stray from practical drama, Loos was more blunt. The design of houses has nothing to do with art. Loos's efforts to quell architecture's appetite for the artistic leave only a small domain of the grand architectural enterprise to think about the beautiful and sublime. Sounding much like Henrici, Loos also tells us that only grave memorials and monuments have anything to do with art. Objects which serve a purpose for living people are precluded from the realm of art. Architecture, above all, must accommodate itself to the cultural traditions that bind a people together. It must not disturb the peace.¹⁴⁶

Loos's appeal to a peaceful life is synonymous with his affirmation of culture as it should exist. By criticizing ornament, he was urging culture to reestablish order. Architecture must not mirror imperfections as art is fond to do. Design, we are told repeatedly, is to be motivated by practical reason. Much of Loos's critique of ornament therefore was directed at designers, whose creative spirit it stunts, and users, whose homes and lives it disgraces with false pretense.

As part of a broadly-based critique, Loos's argument against ornament was also directed at the damage it causes to workers, and the economic viability of society at large. In an appraisal based on economic grounds, Loos was principally concerned with the waste of labor, and the spoilt materials that go into ornamental schemes. In "Ornament und Verbrechen" he commented on the damage that ornamentation does to the productive craft industries. Comparing conditions in factories producing ornamented and unornamented

goods, Loos believed that the time it takes to ornament goods worsens working conditions, and actually leads to the impoverishment of factory workers:

Der ornamentiker muß zwanzig stunden arbeiten, um das einkommen eines modernen arbeiter zu erreichen, der acht stunden arbeitet. Das ornament verteuert in der regel der gegenstand, trotzdem kommt es vor, daß ein ornamentierter gegenstand bei gleichem materialpreis und nachweislich dreimal längerer arbeitszeit um den halben preis angeboten wird, den ein glatter gegenstand kostet.¹⁴⁷

Loos reasoned that if I pay as much for a smooth box as for a decorated one, the difference in time belongs to the worker. As American factory conditions prove, the elimination of ornament would reduce working hours.¹⁴⁸

Like most Austrian and German writers on the practical arts, Loos accepted the capitalist economic organization of society, and limited his criticisms to its deficiencies as they expressed themselves in the functional objects of daily life. Dissimilar to the avant garde carriers of revolutionary modernism, Loos sought stability. While in no way advocating building forms exactly in the manner of the Romans or Renaissance Italians, he was not a social reformer. Design had to be understood given social circumstances, and it was not the task of the architect to change them: "Whether the social transformations will bring further new forms and thoughts, I have not found necessary to investigate. Today the capitalist *Weltanschauung* still rules, and only for it are my excursions valid."¹⁴⁹

As Michael Müller stresses, what Loos criticized in the economic and social relations of his day was their particular backwardness, and unrealized power, his concept of the economical was saturated with thoughts of profitability.¹⁵⁰ In his texts, Loos sought for the general public and society to be better served by architecture, and like many of his contemporaries considered the development of powers in society as dependent upon the betterment of productive relations. It is here that Müller sees Loos's position approach Karl Marx's dictum that economic development proceeds in the reduction of hours it takes for a worker to produce a product.¹⁵¹ Altogether, however, Loos was silent on the fact that a reduction in labor time may not actually profit the worker, but the factory owner.

Naively, he believed that the surplus value of labor, saved by eliminated ornament, could be transferred to the worker's benefit and the enrichment of society as a whole. That surplus value was converted into additional profit while leaving workers with no more free time went unnoticed.

Loos's lack of interest in a social critique, however, did not detract from the originality of his critique of ornament. The relentless drive to demolish arguments sustaining ornament's validity in architecture or the applied arts contained an awareness that within industrial capitalism, art and practical activity must be separated. Unlike the textual pretenses of the nineteenth century *Kunstgewerbe* discourse and the early twentieth century arguments surrounding the *Moderne*, Loos felt that it was wholly illusory to believe that continuity could be achieved between the qualitative characteristics of artisanal labor and the quality of use-value of products in the capitalist marketplace.¹⁵² Loos's blindness to the synthetic possibilities so eagerly grasped by his contemporaries was the cause of his refusal to accept the aestheticization of psychological or physiological processes concerning iron and modern industry.

His dismissal of a social critique, moreover, was the result of his strong desire to maintain social hierarchies. Even while Loos appeared a partisan of the new middle classes and modernity in his articles, he held a long-standing conviction in the existing social order. Never a proponent of egalitarianism, Loos's demarcation of architecture/crafts and art is a wider discrimination between the social and the individual. Art, consequently, represented a problematization of the logical ontological status of community. Based on this assessment, Loos disdained reducing the social world to either an isolated self or an aggregate series of perceptual relationships between subject and object. Hence he was wary of the cognitive research conducted in the name of speculative or psychological aesthetics.

Rejecting attempts to reinstate an authoritative center for artistic culture at the academy, university, museum or workplace, Loos accepted an unfortunate, if necessary specialization of artistic and practical activity. His vision of the future productive world held no illusions of unity, especially at the expense of the social order. Ornament, of course, is the principal example of the contamination of the social order by the wanton acts of individuals. Previously driven out of social life by the progress of humanity, ornament's return in the nineteenth century was a grand symptom of the malaise of social life, and the suspension of the operations of collective progress which had been operating up until this point. The banishment of ornament, the removal of revolutionary artistic thinking, the restoration of traditional collective values, these are elements of Loos's project to reintroduce social hierarchies into the world of design.

It is not surprising therefore that Loos opposed schemes of reunification as grossly mistaken which would blend the now separate pieces of the modern world into an unholy puzzle. By revealing the dehumanization inherent under the sign of individualistic art, he suspended its contact with the social world. His condemnation of so much design that claimed to be modern is understandable under these circumstances. "Modern, for Loos, includes everything we do not know as such: anonymous collective production."¹⁶³ Conscious artistic production, by contrast, these characteristics are to be left to the world of individuals, the paroxysm of the arts. The idea of architecture as non-art, we can see now, was part of a greater project of rescuing the Enlightenment conception of man, the notion of the undividedness between the individual and the social. At least in the social domain, Loos thought, one can hope for a regeneration of *Kultur*.

1. Especially between 1870 and 1900 strained relations prevailed between painting and architecture as both lost sense of the image of their pursuits. As Fritz Schumacher described the situation, "selbst ein Makart in Wien und ein Arthur Fitger in Bremen wirken für die Architektur erfreulich, weil sie in einer zeitlosen Sphäre bleiben." Strömungen in deutscher Baukunst seit 1800, p. 92.
2. Wilhelm v. Bode, "Aufgaben der Kunstgewerbemuseen," Pan 2.1896, p. 126.
3. Theodor Adorno, Aesthetic Theory, trans. C. Lenhardt (London: RKP, 1984), p. 42.
4. For a concise history of various sources for Loos's critique of ornament (among them, Cordemoy, Lodoli, Laugier), see Benedetto Gravagnuolo, "Adolf Loos and the Adventures of Ornament," 9H 6.1983.
5. PS, p. 60.
6. PS, p. 61.
7. PS, p. 59.
8. Fritsch, "Wie kann die Baukunst wieder volksthümlich gemacht werden?," p. 384.
9. L. Trzeschik, "Über die Vereinigung des Technikers und Künstlers im Architekten," ZPBK 37.1877, p. 111.
10. Hermann Muthesius, "Ist die Architektur eine Kunst oder ein Gewerbe?" Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung 13.1893, p. 335.
11. Wagner, Modern Architecture, p. 67.
12. As a consequence, Wagner was opposed to many of the traditional elements of an architectural education, especially the long tour to Italy early in an architect's career.
13. PS, p. 59.
14. Scheffler, Moderne Baukunst, pp. 41-42.
15. Reichensperger, "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?" pp. 295-297.
16. ILG, p. 24.
17. In an article, "Kunstförderung" (1905) Loos reiterated that state institutions are of no help to art. "Die Sorge um die Kunst ist Sache jedes einzelnen: Pflicht des Staates ist es, sie zur Sache jedes einzelnen zu machen." PS, p. 99.
18. ILG, p. 125.
19. ILG, p. 25.

- 20.ILG, p. 26. Writing in "Das Sitzmoebel," Loos likened the retarded state of Austrian carpentry to the deleterious interventions of architects. For there is little difference between the mentality of a London carpenter and his Viennese counterpart. But there is a world of difference between a London carpenter and a Viennese architect. ILG, p. 87.
- 21.ILG, p. 54.
- 22.PS, p. 67.
- 23.ILG, p. 105.
- 24.T, p. 96.
- 25.T, p. 97.
- 26.T, p. 95.
- 27.Alfred Lichtwark, "Der Deutsche der Zukunft," (1901) in Eine Auswahl seiner Schriften, pp. 4-5.
- 28.Alfred Lichtwark, "Künstlerische Bildung auf Örtlicher und Volklicher Grundlage," (1905) in Eine Auswahl seiner Schriften, pp. 28-29.
- 29.Ibid., p. 36.
- 30.Robert Zimmermann, Allgemeine Aesthetik als Formwissenschaft (Wien: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1865), p. 31.
- 31.In similar fashion, H. Maertens described the aesthetic as that science "welche in Beziehung auf die sinnlich wahrnehmbaren Menschenwerke uns theoretisch über die Wirkung des Wohlgefälligen und über die Steigerung dieser Wirkung bis zu den des Schönen, d.h. des Vollendet-Schönen, unterrichten soll." Praktische Aesthetik der Baukunst und des Gewerblichen Künste (Bonn: Max Cohen & Sohn, 1887), p. 1.
- 32.Wenzel Hertig, Die angewandte oder praktische Aesthetik/ oder die Theorie der dekorativen Architektur (Leipzig: Carl Scholtze, 1873), p. 3.
- 33.Immanuel Kant, Critique of Judgement, trans. J.H. Bernhard (London: MacMillan and Co., 1931), p. 47.
- 34.Ibid., p. 80.
- 35.John Dewey, Art as Experience (New York: G.P. Putnam's, 1934), pp. 253-254.
- 36.Kant, Critique of Judgement, p. 209.
- 37.F.W.J. Schelling, The Philosophy of Art, trans. Douglas W. Stott (Minneapolis: Minnesota, 1989), p. 164.
- 38.Ibid., p. 169.

39. As Hermann Lotze claimed, Hegel even expanded the bounds of architecture to include dams, bridges: a notion of the spiritual organization of inorganic matter, or "die Aussenwelt Kunstgemäß zu gestalten." Geschichte der Aesthetik in Deutschland, p. 505.
40. G.W.F. Hegel, Aesthetics, Lectures on Fine Art (Oxford, 1975), p. 655.
41. Arthur Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Representation, p. 214.
42. Jonathan Crary, Techniques of the Observer, On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century (Cambridge, Ma.: Zone, 1990), p. 82.
43. Konrad Fiedler, On Judging Works of Visual Art, trans. Henry Schaefer-Simmern & Fulmer Mood (Berkeley, Ca.: Berkeley, 1949), p. 76.
44. Konrad Fiedler, "Über Wesen und Geschichte der Baukunst" in Schriften zur Kunst, Volume 2 (München: W. Fink, 1971), p. 441.
45. Wölfflin, p. 24.
46. Rudolf Adamy, "Das Kunsthandwerk und die Architektur im System der Künste," DBZ 23.1889, p. 545.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 549.
48. *Ibid.*, pp. 549-550.
49. Cornelius Gurlitt, "Göller's ästhetische Lehre," DBZ 21.1887, p. 602.
50. Johannes Volkelt, Der Symbol-Begriff in der neuesten Aesthetik (Jena: Hermann Dufft, 1876).
51. Paul Moos, Der deutsche Ästhetik der Gegenwart (Berlin: Schuster & Loeffler, 1919), p. 14.
52. Schatteburg, "Gedanken über Stylbildung," p. 77.
53. To this degree Schatteburg was indebted to Robert Vischer, Über das optische Formgefühl (Leipzig: Hermann Credner, 1873).
54. H. Schatteburg, "Das Kunstschöne und die Kunstgewerbeschulen," ABZ 57.1892, 17.
55. Hildebrand, pp. 23-24. Of related interest is Hildebrand's Gesammelte Schriften zur Kunst (Köln: Westdeutscher, 1969).
56. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
57. Göller, Zur Aesthetik der Architektur, p. 88.
58. Gurlitt, "Göller's ästhetische Lehre," p. 603.
59. As Göller described it: "Die doppelte Quelle der kunstgewerblichen und architektonischen Formentradition ist nun bezeichnet: einerseits das Schaffen nach den geometrischen Formgesetzen, die aus der Natur und den Dingen des werktätigen Lebens als eine Ursache des Wohlgefallens herausgeföhlt worden waren, andererseits die Nachbildung der Natur und anderer Gebilde der

Aussenwelt, um jene gedächtnissbilderanregende, erfreuende Verwandtschaft mit früher gesehenen Formen in eigenen Werken niederzulegen." Die Entstehung der Architektonischen Stilformen, p. 20.

60.Göller, Zur Aesthetik der Architektur, p. 11. Ironically, while extolling the importance of pure feeling, Göller unintentionally foreshadowed the 20th century. "Würde hier nur die Statik und Mechanik unser Gefühl bewegen, dann wäre die Maschine das höchste architektonische Kunstwerk." Ibid., p. 10.

61.Göller, Die Entstehung der Architektonischen Stilformen, p. 13.

62.Streiter, p. 97.

63.Göller, Die Entstehung der Architektonischen Stilformen, p. 14.

64.Göller, Zur Aesthetik der Architektur, p. 57. Although he does not mention it, Göller relativized all art periods, endless cycle of "*Heruntersteigens und Erstarrens*" of architecture.

65.Ibid., p. 58. We are likewise told that other objective criteria for the evaluation of stylistic periods are impossible. What counts is the subjective stance of the individual living in any single period.

66.Ibid., p. 17.

67.Ibid., pp. 110-111.

68.Ibid., p. 23.

69.Ibid., p. 40.

70.Göller, Die Entstehung der Architektonischen Stilformen, p. 19.

71.Joseph August Lux, "Technik und Heimatkunst," Der Architekt 15.1909, p. 51.

72.Ferdinand Feldegg, "Der Kampf um die 'Moderne'," Der Architekt 9.1903, p. 29.

73.Ibid., p. 28.

74.Döhmer, p. 50. In the case of Bötticher, Döhmer sees this development as leading to the use of ornament as a mediator between tectonic authenticity and its possibilities for interpretation through natural means. p. 54.

75.See Otto Antonia Graf, "Introduction" to Master Drawings by Otto Wagner (N.Y.: The Drawing Center, 1987).

76.See Eva B. Ottlinger, "Von der 'Kunst in Haus' zur Wohncultur: Formgebungstheorie und Möbeldesign," Adolf Loos, p. 84.

77.Eduard van der Nüll, "Andeutungen über die kunstgemässe Beziehung des Ornaments zur rohen Form," in Die Kunst des Otto Wagners, ed. Gustav Peichl (Wien: Akademie der bildenden Künste, 1984), p. 32.

78.Leon Battista Alberti, On the Art of Building in Ten Books, trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, Ma.: MIT, 1988), p. 156.

79.van der Nüll, p. 31.

80.This is much less the case in theories of architectural space based upon physiological and psychological aesthetics. See August Schmarsow, Das Wesen von architektonischen Schöpfung (Leipzig: Karl W. Hiersemann, 1893); and Grundbegriffe der Kunstwissenschaft (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1905).

81.T, p. 82.

82.T, p. 92.

83.Hübsch, In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?, p. 52.

84.Ibid., p. 26.

85.Bötticher, Die Tektonik, p. 29.

86.See Sebastian Müller, Kunst und Industrie: Ideologie und Organization des Funktionalismus in der Architektur (München: Carl Hanser, 1974), p. 22.

87.Ludwig Pfau, Freie Studien, p. 443.

88.Ibid., pp. 437-438.

89.Comprehending ornament primarily within functional, if not overtly materialist terms, still brought criticism. As described by Heinrich Pudor, Alois Riegl's assault on Semper questioned whether we derive ornament from solely natural processes or from a representaton of nature. In contrast to Semper, Riegl stressed the overriding importance of artistic ideals. As the pure fruit of an elementary artistic, the impulse to decorate relates to both: 1.) a *Spieltrieb* of nature; and 2.) a technical and material *Formenbildung*. "Zur Entstehung des Ornamentschmuckes," Der Architekt 11.1905, p. 2.

90.Gustav Ebe, "Versuche in moderner Bau-Ornamentik," DKuD 9.Oct. 1901 - March 1902, p. 413.

91.Ibid., p. 270.

92.On the perspectival perception of buildings, Redtenbacher was careful to mention the importance of light, shadow, and intensities of color. A facade according to the golden section could disgust many people, and he wrote "Gerade der Umstand, daß wir Gebäude perspectivisch sehen, daß also mit der Änderung des Augenpunktes die perspectivischen Bekürzungen wechseln, all Dimensionen und das Gesamtbild sich verschieben, sollte es deutlich machen, daß nicht auf einem Vergleich der Dimensionen, sondern auf einen solchen der Massen, der Figuren, der Projectionen, welche wir als Resultate angeschauter Volumina mit unserem Auge auffassen, die Schönheit der Verhältnisse beruht." "Ueber der Begriff der Baukunst", ZPBK 37.1877, p. 226.

93.Ibid., p. 227.

94.Ibid., p. 229. In a confusing twist of words, Redtenbacher additionally asked that we believe that the spiritual content of a building is not the sole impetus to ornament. At this point in his discussion, his global theorizing about ornament begins to read like a paeon to the overwhelming importance of poetic thought in architecture. Since the poetic allows for architectural form, not the abstract/spiritual, Redtenbacher asked: is it possible that we look at colors and ornament not as the content of objects, but as their similes? Given this belief that poetic thoughts are the "ideale

Anschauung" of building, he wrote: "Nicht die geistige Inhalt irgen eines Gedankens berechtigt zu seiner Künstlerischen Gestaltung, sondern nur sein poetischer Werth. Jedem Symbol in der Baukunst, der ganzen Charakteristik der Bauwerke müssen poetische Gedanken zu Grunde liegen, nicht blos geistige. Die Construction allein durch Symbole zum Ausdruck zu bringen, ist sein Künstlerisches Gedanke..." Ibid., p. 230.

95.Ibid., p. 193.

96.Ferdinand Ritter von Feldegg, Grundriss der Kunstgewerblichen Formenlehre (Wien: A. Pichler's Witwe und Sohn, 1887), p. 1.

97.H. Schatteburg, "Die Ornamente und die Farbe," ABZ 51.1891, p. 89.

98.Ibid., p. 89.

99.Cornelius Gurlitt, "Alte Formen-neuer Stil!" DBZ 23.1889, p. 346.

100.Streiter, p. 65.

101.Ibid., p. 72.

102.Jessen, "Der kunstgewerbliche Geschmack in England, Das Flachmuster," p. 8.

103.Thorstein Veblen, The Theory of the Leisure Class (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973), p. 109.

104.Ibid., pp. 110-111.

105.ILG, p. 97.

106.ILG, p. 130.

107.See Robert Nisbet, History of the Idea of Progress (N.Y.: Basic Books, 1980).

108.Annemarie DeWaal Malefijt, Images of Man: A History of Anthropological Thought (N.Y.: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), p. 130.

109.Lewis H. Morgan, Ancient Society [1877] (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard, 1964), p. 11.

110.Ibid., p. 15.

111.Edward Tylor, Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom (Boston: Estes & Lauriat, 1874), p. 70.

112.Ibid., p. 94.

113.Stephan Oettermann, Zeichen auf der Haut. Die Geschichte der Tätowierung in Europa (Frankfurt/Main, 1979), p. 72. Quoted in Amanshauser, p. 30.

114.PS, p. 64.

115.Heinrich Pudor, "Gedanken über die moderne Architektur," Der Architekt 8.1902, p. 15.

- 116.Muthesius, "Kunst und Maschine," p. 142.
- 117.T, p. 71.
- 118.T, p. 72.
- 119.T, p. 72.
- 120.T, p. 72.
- 121.T, p. 72.
- 122.T, p. 73.
- 123.Scheffler, Moderne Baukunst, p. 7.
- 124.Ibid., p. 151.
- 125.Ibid., p. 9.
- 126.Ibid., p. 17.
- 127.Scheffler, "Ein Weg zum Stil," p. 293.
- 128.Scheffler, Moderne Baukunst, p. 31.
- 129.T, p. 78.
- 130.T, p. 79.
- 131.T, p. 78.
- 132.T, p. 79.
- 133.Michael Müller, Die Verdrängung des Ornaments: zum Verhältnis von Architektur und Lebenspraxis (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1977), p. 123.
- 134.Ibid., p. 142.
- 135.Dohme, p. 41.
- 136.T, p. 84.
- 137.T, p. 81.
- 138.T, p. 84.
- 139.T, p. 88.
- 140.T, p. 84.
- 141.As an analogy in literature, Loos points out Goethe's purity of language.

142.T, p. 80.

143.T, p. 101.

144.T, p. 101.

145.Karl Henrici, "Die bürgerliche Baukunst," p. 95.

146.T, pp. 102-103.

147.T, p. 83.

148.T, p. 83.

149.PS, p. 68.

150.Michael Müller, p. 136.

151.Ibid., p. 108.

152.Cacciari, "Loos-Wien," p. 15.

153.Beatriz Colomina, "L'Esprit Nouveau: Architecture and Publicité," Architectureproduction, Revisions 2 (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988), p. 77.

CHAPTER 8

THE A-TEMPORALITY OF HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

By the end of the twentieth century's first decade, understanding of architecture had changed dramatically from what it had been 100 years earlier. Textual discourse in Austria and Germany now ambitiously sought to guide architectural design from historical and scientific principles. Yet, perhaps because of the greatly expanded range of experience gleaned during industrialization, the realization of a unified style of design based on rational principles was as evasive in 1910 as it had been in 1810. Although the dissolution of the classical paradigm was now accepted, writers still posited authoritative models, albeit unsuccessfully. Historical styles lacked a unitary legitimacy. Hegemony of empirical methods of observation and realist priorities was marked, but still subject to inculcated ideals. The promise of international design, heralded by the rapid growth of world exhibitions, was boldly challenged by nationalist ideas at century's end. Finally, despite the striving for an organic style after the 1890s, the promise of the *Moderne* to unite all cultural activity in design remained unfulfilled.

Pluralism in architectural thought resulted from dynamic ideological movement and conflict within architectural culture. Unity proved elusive because the spreading heterogeneity of knowledge challenged the Enlightenment vision of a world governed by reason and its architectural ramification - an eternal and natural substance. The awareness of difference had become an essential component of architectural epistemology. Nonetheless, writers openly preferred filiation with absolute epistemologies. Historical representation was itself marshalled to combat the potentially destructive notion that architecture may not be explainable. For Foucault, continuous history attempted "against all decenterings, the sovereignty of the subject, and the twin figures of anthropology and humanism."¹ The writing of history thus became a means to restore certainty by

conflating temporal development and geographical diversity within the reasoned space of a unified subject.

In this way, the problem of historical identification became a cardinal issue of nineteenth century existence. Although awareness of historical difference can be seen in antiquity, during the nineteenth century writers became conscious that they possessed historical consciousness. They became aware, in other words, that they must assemble their own historical identity, precisely because this realization severed them from the continuum of culture. Architectural writers, then, aspired to avoid the consequences of this realization by inventing order in history. What transpired was an attempt to comprehend the evasive identity of modern man through historical systems. Architectural discourse became intoxicated by the notion that historical succession could explain both differences over time, geography and ethnicity.

The pre-eminent purpose of historical texts was to explain away difference and the other, to transform nineteenth century *Gesellschaft* into pre-modern *Gemeinschaft*. As Vincent Descombes writes of modern man's ongoing need for myths, a goal of history has been: "To temper the brutal element of existence, to absorb the heterogeneous, to give meaning to the senseless, to rationalize the incongruous; in short, to translate the other into the language of the same..."² This epistemological urge was not unique to the modern era, and Wlad Godzich sees the recuperation of the other as a persistent condition: "Western thought has always thematized the other as a threat to be reduced, as a potential same-to-be, a yet-not-same."³ Still, in the nineteenth century this urge was greatly amplified. Writers hoped to discover a rationale for the present by recuperating the ever-expanding diversity of knowledge. As humanity's cultural range was expanded over space and time, historical reason was deployed to condition, limit, and delineate the expanding realm of experience.

It was therefore characteristic of writing on architecture and the practical arts in the nineteenth century that it confront definitions of history. German and Austrian writers, whether historians, philosophers or critics, came to an awareness of architecture through a judgement of how it was to be known in a temporal world. Out of the far-reaching effects of historical consciousness emerged several explanatory models for historical change. As we mentioned earlier, the dominant mode of historical explanation in the nineteenth century was the developmental, the notion derived from Johann Gottfried von Herder of a linear progression of events from the primitive to the modern. Subsequently transformed by Hegel's dialectic, teleological history approached the realization of an ultimate state of events, and the recoding of architecture's transitory existence to eternal spirit. As Cornelius Gurlitt described the effects of art history upon design, the works of the past were seen not only as models, but also as stages in a spiritual development: "*Man untersuchte sie auf ihre Quellen und auf ihre Folgen, als Glied in der Reihe menschlicher Schöpfungen.*"⁴

Developmental and teleological sequences of historical change had many variations. As we will discuss later, Alois Riegl's delineation of the *Kunstwollen* furnished a developmental scheme for the change occurring among art objects over the millennia. To a large degree, whereas many art historians and writers on architecture accepted some notion of a developmental *Zeitgeist*, they also rejected those Hegelian strictures which corresponded to the de-materialization of physical form in architecture. Still other schemes of historical change we have discussed rejected linear models altogether, and most often featured cyclical or bi-polar historical systems: the anthropological narrative of the fall from grace, where architecture lost its divine qualities in a descent to the primitive only to rise again through the civilizing process; the idea among the arts and crafts movement of the return, where pre-industrial culture is corrupted by the machine and urban decadence,

and is later revitalized by a rebirth of the handcrafts; the opposition of Germanic and Latin qualities as a basis for national identity in design.

Yet, by the end of the nineteenth century historical representation itself was accused of promoting difference. Architectural theorists in particular were haunted by indistinct design which they believed, resulted from a century of writing and reading history. Although similarity and stability were the goals, eclecticism was the result. This, in turn, brought anxiety. Historical explanation, far from making reason more lucid, seemed to have established complex paths of architectural activity. Because of the seemingly limitless expansion of knowledge about the past, the ability to create a modern cultural identity appeared to be hopelessly deferred. In a reaction to the developmental notion of history, architectural theory gently suppressed the new awareness of cultural alterity. While historical consciousness could not be erased from the evocation of cultural identity, its contours could be selectively pared to prevent the noxious presence of eclecticism.

As we know, Adolf Loos was deeply critical of eclecticism as the consequence of historicism. He denied schemes of linear historical development, and recognized, as theorists of cyclical schemes of history had, that social conditions can impede necessary change. In this sense, he accepted the idea that civilization and savagery, machine and handcrafts, free plan and symmetrical plan, can co-exist at the same time, and stated that the rational and irrational co-exist in design. In advocating the imperfections of history, however, Loos still wanted to explain away difference. He never accepted the presence of eclecticism (constituting the other) in the modern age, and much of his textual activity was directed to rid culture of what he considered its decadent traits. He advocated progressive architecture by discounting the primitive, the artistic, and the decorative.

For Loos, the modern architect, was capable of choice. Thus, it may not be all that perplexing that Loos could accept technological and societal change at the same time as

holding a belief in universal values. It would be the role of the architect to transform change into progress. As we will see below, Loos's quest for truth held the promise of uncovering the abiding workings of style within the fluctuating panorama of human phenomena. To a large extent, Loos's philosophy of history resembled the Enlightenment notion of progress more than the nineteenth century idea of development. It implied, moreover, that consolidation of the concepts "classic" and "modern" could represent a new "a-temporal order".

History and Eclecticism

By the turn of the century, a historical (and art historical) education was so prevalent that the formal languages of the historical styles were understood widely.⁵ Not only were formal patterns of the styles easily recognizable, but historical knowledge about them was more intimately analyzed. It is no coincidence that alongside the growth of historical awareness came a corresponding appreciation of the means to which that awareness was used. Writing in 1909, the philosopher Heinrich Goesch distinguished four possible kinds of relations between architectural design and history.⁶ The first classification, the *Neuschaffungstypus*, refers principally to functionalist design where the architect proceeds from raw needs, accommodating no concession to the historical syntax of prior works. This attitude, associated most with utilitarian construction of factories and engineering works, is fundamentally a-historical, and reactive to any intimation of historical constraints on design. The second category, the *Anknüpfungstypus* (seen in Romanesque, Gothic, and Baroque design), is the case where an architect continues working within a traditional grammar whilst able to transform it in response to new demands. Accordingly, one processes the knowledge of past art epochs and takes over their designs as a self-understood basis of one's own creations. This outlook refers most to the unconscious pursuit of design within a secure tradition, the lost state of being often

lamented by the overly-conscious historical writers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The third type, the *Wiederbelebungstypus* (that of Renaissance Italy and the nineteenth century) is that phase most associated with historicism. Here Gieseler saw architects undertake the complete imitation of an earlier style, as historical sincerity is placed above other design considerations. Fully historicist, masquerading as something it is not, this outlook was both the most prevalent during the course of the nineteenth century and the most despised as the century drew to a close. Lastly, the *Bereicherungstypus*, an attitude most associated with the *Moderne*, was evidently preferred by Gieseler. The most compelling instance of pure artistry, historical knowledge forms the basis for individual creations, and is solely applied to the "*Ausbildung seines eignen Geistes*." While to varying degrees all four historical variations continued their innovations in twentieth century design, the final category's rich store of conceptual variations became the raw material for a hyper-historical understanding of culture in the 1890s and 1900s. It is in this last classification that we detect the subjectivism of history. Historical knowledge, as we discussed in Chapter Six, is personalized. As the theoretical basis for both eclecticism and anti-eclecticism, it becomes a personal excursion into the warehouses of culture.

The consequences of systematic attention to history was also recognized by writers on architecture before Loos, if in less systematic form. A concise account of the predominant influence of historical thought on architecture during the nineteenth century was given by K.E.O. Fritsch in "*Stil Betrachtungen*" (1890). Here Fritsch traced the age of stylistic ruminations back to 1750, the time of J.J. Winckelmann, and the age during which men began to philosophize about the origin of forms, and demand for architecture a return to the natural simplicity of the golden years of mankind.⁷ Winckelmann, of course, discovered those golden years in classical Greece, and unleashed a long wave of

Hellenism.⁸ Fritsch was keenly aware, however, that this return to a Greek state of creation was neither successful nor lasting. A succession of stylistic phases followed the Greek Revival, none of which proved as durable as the earlier revivals of antiquity during the Renaissance and Baroque ages. By the 1890s, Fritsch observed eclecticism as endemic to architectural culture. An Italian Renaissance vocabulary was dominant in academic education while the Gothic style was dominant in the ecclesiastical domain. Despite efforts at unification and exclusion over the course of the century, no style reigned preeminent across the field of architecture. During this time architecture became, according to Fritsch, progressively less something "*Gewordenes und Gegebenes*" and more an object for free invention and choice.⁹ The immediate, flowing power of history in the hands of architecture, he concluded, was bound to increase the danger of rampant eclecticism.

In the late twentieth century, eclecticism has been consecrated as the sum of the heterological dialogues in world culture. Yet, a century earlier, historical eclecticism, or the relativism of design according to individual inclination, made for uneasy theorizing. In the concluding pages to his monumental *Geschichte der Architektur* (1870) Wilhelm Lübke made a bleak, yet common characterization of nineteenth century design, stressing the damaging effects of eclecticism:

Mit unrecht verlangt man schon jetzt einen 'neuen Baustyl.' Zunächst wird das ganze Leben sich seine dem neuen Inhalt entsprechenden Formen schaffen müssen. Unsere Architektur steckt bis jetzt noch tief im Eklektizismus und sucht sich meistens bei den einzelnen Aufgaben desjenigen Styles der Vergangenheit zu bedienen, welcher dem jedesmaligen Zweck am besten zu entsprechen scheint. Für den Kirchenbau arbeitet man meistens nach mittelalterlichen Schabone, für den Profanbau bietet die antike Formwelt in den verschiedenen Auffassungen, welche sie im Laufe der Zeiten erfahren, den passendsten Kanon dar.¹⁰

Part of the problem underlying a theory of eclecticism lay in its ambiguous relationship to stylistic admixture, and the limits on subjective decision-making.

This difficulty can also clearly be felt in L. Trzeschtik's essay, "*Stilverschmelzung und Zukunftstil*" (1876). Here, Trzeschtik brought up the troubling problem of eclecticism:

Is it inadvisable to mix styles together? In answering his question - *Wo ist also die von den kunstkritischen Theoretikern so puritanisch verfochtene tadellose Stilreinheit?* - he responded at first in the negative, and affirmed that all styles include mixing. The passage between the styles bespeaks this phenomenon. Trzeschtik was unwilling to accept the radical consequences of this notion, the creation of the present through free borrowing from the past. Still, he affirmed eclectic design within the parameters of building types: *"Jeder Stil hat eine Physiognomie, welche ihn für eine bestimmte Gattung von Gebäude besonders qualificirt."*¹¹

Following Georg Palm, Trzeschtik argued that the Renaissance style was most appropriate for palaces and villas, while Gothic was better suited for churches, city halls, libraries. Thus, different styles cannot be substituted for each other, as they each have their own peculiar qualities.¹² Trzeschtik's pessimism was the basis for his historical eclecticism, and eventually led him to deny the possibility of developing a completely new style of building. Writing in "Die Moderne Architektur" (1889), he felt that such a style might be possible in fifty to one-hundred years. As for now, the contemporary age's false democracy, bad religious conditions, and sickness of the political-social life made such a development impossible. Thus despite strides in technology, commerce and industry, Trzeschtik concluded that the age was characterized by desolate conditions wherever we look.¹³

Whether promoted by despair or optimism, and whether typologically sanctioned or individually chosen, eclecticism was rarely popular in print. It contradicted that urge mentioned throughout the texts of the nineteenth century for an organic connection between design and society. In this spirit, Jacob Prestel, in "Die Architektur der Zukunft" (1897), recognized that eclecticism can be no basis for an architecture of the future. Citing the efforts of archaeology and art history, he wrote that:

Die Stilkunde hat aus diesen Ergebnissen die Erkenntnis einer allgemeinen geistigen Verwandtschaft aller architektonischen Richtungen geschöpft,

welche in den alten Stilversionen, die, analog der Religion jener Völker, noch eng geschlossene nationale kundgebungen waren, in geschiedener Art zur Darlegung kamen, deren Formensprache in der hellenischen Baukunst zum ersten in sich vollendeten Ausdrucke gelangte.¹⁴

For Prestel, great architecture does not result from a choice of stylistic models, but more in the way that the new is created out of that which is given.

The Architect as Shaper of History

Representing given reality, as we have seen throughout nineteenth century discourse, was a highly controversial affair. Architectural writing likewise was marked by dissension when it came to constructing historical identity. Loos, like Lübke and Semper, opposed eclecticism, and felt that freedom in architecture was limited by the stamp of inner necessity and self-willed restrictiveness.¹⁵ Never is artistic freedom arbitrary. Yet, unlike both earlier writers, who more or less accepted the role of historical forms in overlaying a functional architectural core, Loos sharply distinguished architectural expression from historical origins. Like Friedrich Nietzsche, Loos maintained a theory of resistance. For the philosopher this encompassed "a sequence of more or less profound, more or less independent processes of appropriation, including the resistances used in each instance, the attempted transformations for purposes of defense or reaction, as well as the results of successful counterattacks."¹⁶

Loos's understanding of the need to resist history brings up the fact that Goesch's four categories concerning the relationship between history and design excludes a fifth possibility: critical resistance. This category represents historical knowledge according to simultaneously subjective and nomological standards. History, to begin with, is not an organic phenomenon to the point that humans cannot intrude upon its development. The subject plays a large part in its unfolding. Yet, culture is also a universal quantity, and history is grasped as the circulation of true and false expressions. This is the scientific or rational premise of a nomological interpretation of history. The subject, while free to act, is

bound by a filiation to reasonable and progressive action. It is from such a theory of history, I believe, that Loos approached the problem of giving boundaries to the status of the architect.

Weighed by great responsibility, the role of the architect in Loos's reading becomes an extended metaphor of that of the individual in modern society. With a basic loyalty to rational principles, the architect furnishes values to a society increasingly particularized and fragmented. To some extent, this idea of the architect as creator or stabilizer of cultural values was not new. Rudolf Eitelberger, for his part, saw the role of the contemporary architect much as Vitruvius had: *"Er verlangt, dass in der Bildung eines Architekten die verschiedensten Wissenschaftszweige mit dem elementaren Unterricht verbunden sein müssen."*¹⁷ Nevertheless, while architects working within the Vitruvian paradigm had always possessed limited historical consciousness, the open historical universe of the nineteenth century made the cultural identity of the architect an elusive ambition. As did other architects of his time, Loos held conflicting ideas about the mission of the architect in contemporary society. On the one hand, it is clear that Loos wanted the architect, as deliverer, to lead humanity back from the road of dishonesty and the parvenu, for only the architect could understand the manifold of complexities inherent in the built environment. On the other hand, as his observations on the estrangement of architects from the true principles of design show, Loos more often admonished architects as the last people on earth who have anything useful to say or do about design.

As we have seen, the writings of Loos on the role of the architect in society mark the stages of his preoccupation with the evils of commercialism and academicism, issues which were of great importance in his idea on art. Early on, the spaciousness of Loos's argument on the modern architect - his belief that builders and clients need to be reeducated - allowed him to argue for a more important role for architects. In this version of redemption, architects are initially seen as the re-integrators of certain Western or

rational traits into a backward society such as Austria, and at the same time as encouraging a thoroughly scientific outlook in regard to contemporary needs. The apparent inconsistency between the possibility of allowing a single architect to design everything in a home, and encouraging specialization, was briefly resolved by Loos's conception of the superman architect. In 1898, he had in mind Otto Wagner. Indeed, Loos felt that Wagner could accomplish the Gesamtkunstwerk since he carries only one thing wherever he goes: his artistry. He (Wagner) has that quality seen only in a few English and American architects...*"er kann naemlich aus seiner architektenhaut heraus- und in eine beliebige handwerkhaut hineinschlüpfen."*¹⁸

Similarly, in the essay "Die alte und die neue Richtung in der Baukunst" (1898), Loos sought to demonstrate - at least at first - that it is possible for the architect to achieve a lasting and constructive double awareness of tradition and modern needs. In one of his passages, he specified the qualities of architect as hero:

In order to calculate correctly the material needs of his time, he (the architect) must also be a modern man. He must not only know exactly the cultural requirements of his time, rather he must stand himself at the summit of this culture. Then he has in his power to give a different stamp to determined cultural forms and gebraeuchen through the layout of a plan, through the shaping and design of objects of everyday use. He leads culture, therefore, never backwards, rather forwards.¹⁹

Yet, before completing his essay, Loos contradicted himself, and the architect hero was transformed into a fragmented protagonist, incapable of recasting culture. Evidently taken aback by the comprehensive trust he had proposed for architects, Loos was compelled to mirror the architect on critical criteria commonplace for his time. He complained that due to material complexities, architects must specialize: "A building, all whose complete details up to the keystone emerge from a single head loses all freshness and will be boring. Always the same ornament, always the same profile..."²⁰ Soon afterwards, opposing designing everything in a house by a single architect, Loos added that all individuality would be lost in the process.²¹

Loos evidently took the architectural work not as that of a solitary individual, but as the work of an entire culture.²² Earlier, in the essay, "Interieurs, Ein Praeludium" (1898) Loos had given retrospective form to the idea of specialization and its place in architecture and *Kunstgewerbe*. He wrote of design moving through stages of organization from specialization to generalization. Before 1800, we are told, homes were decorated in much the manner in which people outfitted themselves. In what Loos considered the true modern way, furniture was purchased from the carpenter, wallpaper from the paperhanger.²³ Just as we buy our shoes from the shoemaker. In the nineteenth century, however, architects began to design household goods themselves. What had been previously in the purview of specialists became the domain of the generalist. In this way, the academies, in the guise of architects, imposed their will on society. As we remarked in Chapter Seven, architectural training led architects to concentrate on columns and cornices and not the useful materials and solid workmanship that were customarily observed by specialists. Thus, unification of the separate aspects of design by the architect oriented interior design from considerations of comfort to those of parvenu: "*Nachmittags sitzt er (the architect) schon fest am reißbrett und liniert das barocke schlafzimmer oder den chinesischen spucknapf herunter.*"²⁴ Such searching occurred only during the first period of *kulturlosigkeit* that the history of mankind has known, the nineteenth century.²⁵ By putting culture in museums, art academies, books, Loos articulated, men have done great damage by dislocating its meaning.

Loos's revival of the discourse on the role of the architect in Das Andere indicated a continued pessimism as to the possibilities of a total work of art created by an architect. It is necessary to accept, he wrote, that the occupant always has the final word.²⁶ Likewise, the real burden of designing the home lies not upon the artists, but: "*Vom arbeitenden, schaffenden menschen allein erwarte ich eine gesundung der gewerblich verhältnisse, eine hebung der kultur und des geschmackes.*"²⁷ An artist cannot decorate your house to reflect

your individuality, only his. Only you can decorate your home, and when artists are allowed to do so, one ends up surrounded by one's home, dressed in a parrot costume out of a costume shop.²⁸ It follows that the objects of interior decoration, for Loos, are not something to be worshipped and consumed at the art marketplace, but always are the means to an end, oriented to the future life in the home. People must keep their guard up: *"Wir leben allerdings in einer zeit, in der sich jeder tapeterzeichner als architect bezeichnet. Das macht ja nichts. In Amerika nennt sich ja auch jeder heizer ingenieur. Aber wohnungseinrichten hat mit dem architekten nichts zu tun."*²⁹

In one of his most poetic passages, in "Architektur", Loos described looking over a peaceful rural landscape and quiet sea where everything breathes beauty and peace.³⁰ Upon looking back one more time, however, his spell was broken. The observer noticed the outlines of a building, not the work of either a peasant or an engineer. At once disturbing the peace which reigns so magnificently elsewhere in the landscape, it is the bitter fruit of an architect. This short parable is meant by Loos to illustrate the destructive influence of the work of architects on the unity of cultural life. Using his usual hyperbole, Loos raised the question: why does an architect disturb the peace of the lake? For Loos, it is all an answer of culture. Culture, he saw, is that which brings rational action through each balanced act of the interior and exterior man.³¹ Bricklayers, stonemasons, and carpenters (in their pure and uncorrupted identities) possess it, and are concerned only with the task at hand and the best available means for accomplishing it. They do not think in terms of something beautiful or ugly, but act on instincts generations old.³²

Here, as elsewhere, Loos concluded that architects lack a sense of culture; and are on a destructive creative journey, a *geschmacksverheerung*. Like most city dwellers, architects do not have the certainty of the cultured peasant, or the traditional craftsman. They are uprooted. Dismembered from the existing tradition around them, they learn everything from books, countless poisonous publications which serve to hinder self-

reflection and divert the architect from his real purpose.⁵³ In elaborating his ideas on the role of the architect, therefore, Loos framed the problem as one of too much knowledge, suggesting that there are no answers to be gained from immersion in history.

Because of their awareness of the heterogeneity of historical explanation, architects are described by Loos as unfit to lead design back to rational principles. Reason predicts an inevitable sequence of events. Historical education, by contrast, arbitrarily extends the possibilities of design. Irrational design and a plurality of historical styles are, then, two sides of the same coin. They signify the discordant unravelling of the universal.

Classic and Modern

What appears idiosyncratic, at first glance, is Loos's concurrent obsession with the signature of the classic. Why, if Loos rejected historical learning and the aims of encyclopedic knowledge, did he not also reject classical learning? Seen against histories of the modern movement, his lauding of the classic appears reactionary. After all, the classic, as the manifestation of an ideal based upon principles rooted in age-old tradition, was often set against the modern in accounts of the rise of architecture in the twentieth century. Furthermore, an understanding of the classic as illustrative of abstract (and hence impractical), and outdated principles was not solely the product of latter-day historiography, but was strongly present in the discourse of early modernism. Opposition of the two concepts was instrumental in many definitions of the progressive design at the turn of the century.

While we have seen elsewhere that Julius Lessing was originally amenable to the classical tradition, as were most theorists of the practical arts in Austria and Germany, in later writings he translated the unifying force of architectural reason into the "becoming" of modern life. The modern, defined by Lessing as progress, change, urbanization, technology, and the rapid clip of communication was all the classic was not. Likewise, Karl Scheffler's

textual strategy for the concept "modern" also throws the anti-classical tendency within early modernism into sharp relief.

As we have discussed already, Scheffler considered the taming of natural powers of prime importance in architectural creation. As he saw it, the paucity of attention given to these forces in the previous century accounted for architecture's lack of a vigorous living tradition and its repeated seduction by the senseless struggles over long-dead traditions, the styles. It is largely for these reasons, Scheffler inferred, that the nineteenth century was unable to discover its own towering building energy. Instead of realizing the fury of creation: "*Die Kunst der Gegenwart sucht rastlos nach Ueberlieferungen und beweist dadurch ihre Richtungslosigkeit.*"³⁴ A preoccupation of art and stylistic thinking compensates for that power of design which can only grow instinctually in harmony with practical life.

Scheffler was unequivocal when he wrote that foremost among the speculative tendencies to construct a false architectural reality is antiquity: "*Das grösste Hindernis zum eigenen Schaffen ist dem Modern immer noch die Antike.*"³⁵ Owing to its grasp on architectural education and patronage, ideas drawn from antiquity unceasingly weakens our creativity. The theoretical ballast of Greek art weighed upon us as a great, dead mass. Yet, for Scheffler, it seemed evident that when anyone looked at today's building questions he would soon realize the immense distance that separates the Hellenic essence from that of our own. Renewal, predictably, can only come about through a rejection of classical tendencies. In painting, for instance, Scheffler was encouraged by a movement from endless mythologizing about Greece and Rome to a spiritually powered analysis of reality.³⁶

Positioned as a dialectic of being and becoming, classic and modern symbolized for many two poles of architectural essence. As conceptual opposition to the modern, the classic was assigned in these readings a fixed (and often negative) discursive realm. In a textual, as opposed to real sense, the boundaries of a conceptual realm were conditioned by

those meanings desired for its opposite. But, as we have seen earlier, depending on the point of view of the text, the boundaries of the conceptual power of the classic could be very different. Thus, as is the case with most architectural concepts, the classic could also be invested with different discursive meaning.³⁷

It is quite logical therefore that the classic be positively related to the modern. After all, as we saw in Chapter Four, both concepts drew an international portrait of architecture. One of the most enduring names for architectural modernism, the International Style, may have been difficult to conceive without the existence of a previous international style. For centuries in Europe, internationalism had been identified with the Latin language and the visual forms of Rome and Greece. Hence, the idea of the cosmopolitanism almost invariably carried with it the message of renewal along classical lines, the idea of a unitary force moving through European history and ensuring for its cultural products measure, beauty, and endurance.

Although their etymology reaches back to the Renaissance, the use of the concepts "classic" and "modern" in nineteenth century discourse reflects the concerns of the industrial age, and the fragmentation of the idea of reason. They are, in other words, myths by which writers on architecture and the practical arts sought to impose rational unity upon a gathering of increasingly unmanageable objects and events. For its part, the modern has been frequently understood as the embodiment of an epistemological revolution, the wave of scientific/rational progress begun in the late Renaissance. The concept "classic," as opposed to the actual historical age, was also constituted upon the enormous growth of empirical knowledge which began in the Renaissance. As Cornelius Gurlitt remarked upon the act of study and creation, it is not only the modern that strives to create new forms with the knowledge of science and technology. Such modern activity also occurs in the supposedly antique realm. Archaeology and art historical research too

are scientific pursuits, and the notion of the classic is as much a creation of a contemporary sensibility as an architecture of raw forms:

Ehe man also das Moderne erstrebt, müßte man tiefer sein Wesen erforschen, also es Wagner that. Bloß mit der Ansicht, daß es nicht das Alte, daß es Vermeidung des Alten sei, ist wahrlich wenig erreicht. Die Altertümelei ist doch auch etwas noch nie oder doch nur selten Dagewesenes; jene, die wir betreiben, die wissenschaftlich alles Alte umfassende, ist nur unserer Zeit eigen. Das Nachahmen des Alten ist also sicher eine ganz moderne Thätigkeit.³⁸

Gurlitt's preference for historical forms stemmed from his lack of faith in utilitarian design and belief in the free artistic consciousness. As he saw it, aesthetics should not lead art: rather, art itself, and art theory, must make its own laws.³⁹ classical theory, of course, is the epitome of such laws.

In an argument which reverberated the ideas of the quarrel between Claude Perrault and Francois Blondel 200 years earlier, Gurlitt wrote that columns are no longer designed according to the laws of proportion, but rather in regard to the loads they bear. For the historian Gurlitt, it deserved mention that the Vitruvian legacy is finished once and for all.⁴⁰ *"Nicht die erhöhte Vorstellung einer vollkommenen baulichen Schönheit soll das einzelne Bauwerk darstellen, sondern es soll an sich die Erfüllung der aus verschiedenartigsten Zwecken und Vorbedingungen sich ergebenden Aufgabe sein."*⁴¹

Rather, Gurlitt believed that antiquity must be an inheritance, a ladder from which we are to mount, a fertile soil from which to bring forth beautiful, new cultures.⁴² Invoking both Perrault and Schinkel, he wrote:

Ist es nun wahr, dass das Neue kommt, weil es kommen muss, und dass es in Formen kommt, die nicht nach dem Geschmack der Allgemeinheit sich bilden, sonder trotz dieses Geschmacks, dass also das Neue im Entstehen nicht schön sein kann, sondern erst nachdem es gesiegt hat, schön wird...⁴³

Likewise, if in Loos's handling there is no essential antagonism between classic and modern, it is because these concepts, respectively, are put into moral conflict with the pathos of arbitrary change and disfunctional design. The concept "classic", as a construct of enduring cultural values, became an analogue of a predictable, and eminently useful

modern. What Loos, Le Corbusier and many others discovered in the classic was something akin to an a-temporal spirit; the basis for the possibility for modern practical reason in design. Throughout the age of Vitruvian interpretation, simplicity of form, and the shortest means to achieve a desired end had been objectives of classical theory. For instance, Alois Hirt underscored the classical imperative for a *"sparsam Gebrauch des Mittel"* because our eyes must not be confused by too much variety.⁴⁴ Roughly one hundred years later, Otto Wagner's functional architecture set within classical mores of symmetry, composition, and the straight line still bore out this thought.

Though also drawn to the pre-industrial crafts tradition, Loos based his notion of architectural reality most on a convergence of values between the classic and modern, which he often found in the early nineteenth century. In "Meine Bauschule" (1907), Loos described his objective of rejoining the classical stream: *"Im anfang des neunzehnten jahrhunderts haben wir die tradition verlassen. Dort (in the nineteenth century) will ich wieder anknüpfen."*⁴⁵ Within his three subject areas - interior design, art history, and theory of materials - Loos sought to develop a method of design which would integrate new innovations in technic and materials with that which is lasting in existing building: *"Die äußere gestaltung knüpft traditionell dort an, wo die Wiener architekten die tradition verlassen haben."*⁴⁶

There can be no mistake that Loos never equated the classic with the negative connotations to which both he, and numerous others (including Scheffler) viewed the styles. At this point it is important to point out that the sources for Loos's positive handling of the classic are in earlier architectural discourse. During the nineteenth century, narratives of the classic had usually appeared in the guise of revitalization, as the flags of antiquity and eternal values were flown to announce an imperative renewal of beliefs. The classic was frequently adopted to supplant flux and instability, invoked as an elevated, pure, or sacred language amidst babbling, vernacular tongues. That, of course, is where eternal values

come into play. The axiomatic meanings of the past, embodied in the particular interpretation of these supposed eternal values are the occasion for reconstituting architecture. It is easy to see that such arguments allowed seemingly modern architects to deliberately feel the appeal of classicism. Loos's modernity, I believe, was no different; for it rejected the revolutionary and the novel for that which is conservative and fitting.

Loos's sense of the enduring qualities of building, and the conservative nature of the architectural profession, led him at first to a strong allegiance to Greece. Writing in "Kunstgewerbliche Rundschau" (1898) he praised the Greeks, with whom he presumed he shared a conviction for eternal values. For them: *"Veränderungen an der form entspringen nicht der neuerungssucht, sondern dem wunsche, das beste noch zu vervollkommen."*⁴⁷ Through an integral awareness of the relationship between form and the immediate context, Loos contended that the Greeks created only that which was practical, without concerning themselves with aesthetic beauty as an end in itself.⁴⁸ Convinced of the spiritual superiority of classical antiquity over our own time, Loos expressly faced up to the integral importance of classical building principles for all time.⁴⁹ For the classical absolute, superbly renewed by the Italians in the fourteenth century, and brought north soon afterward, accounted for the high points of the Germanic architectural tradition: Schlueter, Fischer von Erlach, Schinkel.⁵⁰ As Loos claimed: *"Der zukünftige grosse Architekt wird ein classiker sein. Einer, der nicht an die werke seine vorgänger, sondern direkt an das classische alterthum anknüpft."*⁵¹

By 1907, Loos had altered his thinking somewhat in regard to classical antiquity, having adopted Rome as the central locus for his appraisal of the classical tradition. Thus, in the article "Meine Bauschule," Loos asserted that since the fall of the Roman Empire all architecture has been an attempt to build again like the Romans. The Roman presence in our spirits is described by Loos as all-encompassing: "Our culture is built from the knowledge of the special greatness of classical antiquity. The technique of our thought and

feelings have been taken over from the Romans. From the Romans we have our social feelings and our search for the soul."⁵² Aldo Rossi comments that Loos's love of great buildings stemmed from their ability to translate the monument into something customary. "Roman architecture signifies here the grand construction, the possibility of a way of building that is not tied to personality; the architects apply scientific principles and let no sign of public or personal crises appear."⁵³

By the time of "Architektur", Rome had far surpassed Greece as the source for Loos's classical longings. Once again, Loos wrote that our culture is built from the "*überragenden grösse des klassischen altertums*."⁵⁴ For the first time, the Romans were presented as socially-conscious. The Greeks, to their detriment, were considered above all as individuals, as artists working at the expense of the social needs of their culture. For these reasons, Loos wrote that we owe our cultural values and breeding of the soul to the Romans. Equally important, for Loos's purposes, was the Roman ability to innovate bold new building functions within the formal traditions of Greek architecture. We are asked to recognize the practical tradition of the Romans. They took everything from the Greeks and adapted it to their own needs, without willfully dropping the principles of the tradition. Apparently, Loos felt that the earlier masters of German architecture were attempting much the same thing. He sadly lamented at the end of the article: if only the example of Schinkel and Fischer von Erlach had fallen on our generation.⁵⁵

Loos's adherence to the classic was not limited solely to antiquity or its revivals. Since his notion of the classic strongly referred to a logic of inquiry, its semantic range extended to other guiding concepts within his narratives, such as the design logic of the English. As Dietmar Steiner writes: "The plainness which Loos called for in the name of antiquity also bore for him the character of a construction with a 'German' identity, whose cultural and historical function as model he saw based in the Anglo-American cultural domain, and which he put forward against the frivolous, Latin culture."⁵⁶ As we saw in

Chapter Four, if Loos strongly admired the classical spirit of antiquity, his sources for twentieth century classicism lay equally in Anglo-American practicality. It is clear that Loos felt perfectly comfortable equating contemporary English culture with that of the Greeks: "*Die Engländer, die ingenieure sind unsere Hellenen.*"⁶⁷ As he saw it, it is no accident that contemporary Austrians should acquire culture from them, as earlier Austrians tapped on the springs of Italy and Greece.

The Denotation of Cultural Propriety

The concept of timeliness, or living in one's own age, was one of Loos's major preoccupations.⁵⁸ The concept "classic", as we have seen Loos use it, equated the contemporary objectification of needs and sensations into such absolute truth. It meant that architects must stop trying to imitate the life and form-styles of historical peoples. In the "Potemkin'sche Stadt" Loos wrote optimistically: "If we cease to be ashamed (of who we are), you would see how quickly we would acquire an architecture suited to our times."⁵⁹ At the conclusion to this article, he stressed that we should try to live neither in wood huts where happy peasants dwell nor in stone palaces where feudal lords seem to reside.⁶⁰

One sort of imitation that received a great deal of scorn in Loos's time was the middle class attempt to mimic the aristocracy. Richard Streiter, in his "Architektonische Zeitfragen" pleaded for a release from the pretensions and false idealism of the middle class imitation of aristocratic mores. Like Loos, he attacked the *parvenugeschmack*, the ostentatious art for the growing bourgeois class. As Streiter described it, art forms of the aristocracy were profaned into the service of materialist luxury: "*Wo kein Reichtum war, da sollte er dennoch vorgetäuscht werden.*"⁶¹ Similarly, Loos concluded his review of the 1897 winter exhibition with a succinct attack on the pretense of the middle classes to be something they are not. The task for the modern artist is to raise the taste of its various and characteristic *standesabstufungen* to make people comfortable with their station in life:

Der moderne geist verlangt vor allem, dass der gebrauchsgegenstand praktisch sei. Für ihn bedeutet schönheit die höchste vollkommenheit. Und da das unpraktische niemals vollkommen ist, so kann es auch nicht schön sind. Zum zweiten verlangt er unbedingt wahrheit. Ich habe ja aber schon gesagt, dass die imitation, die pseudoeleganz, gott sei dank, endlich unmodern wird. Und drittens verlangt er individualität. Das heißt, daß sich im allgemeinen der könig wie könig, der bürger wie der bürger und der bauer wie der bauer einzurichten habe und daß im besonderen wieder jeder könig, jeder bürger and jeder bauer seine charaktereigenschaften in seiner wohnungseinrichtung zum ausdrück bringen soll.⁶²

Furthermore, in his piece on the "Weihnachtsausstellung in Österreichischen Museum" (1897), Loos claimed that the character of domestic dwelling of the middle classes was not at all served by a servile adherence to aristocratic principles of design.⁶³ In regard to household objects Loos renounced this artistic attempt to convert a user into a viewer. Loos accused nineteenth century designers for falsely misusing aristocratic furniture and household objects as a model for the bourgeois household. After all, the purpose of the two is not at all similar: "*Sein zweck (princely) war, zu repräsentieren und von dem reichthume, der pracht, der kunstliebe und dem geschmacke seines besitzers zeugnis abzulegen.*"⁶⁴ The purpose of aristocratic furniture, therefore, as a symbol of power and wealth, excluded the more mundane consideration of use.⁶⁵ We are reminded by Loos that one needs a living room, but not a throneroom, otherwise we suffer bruises, Renaissance, Baroque and Rococo blisters.⁶⁶ It is the business of our age to produce not a new chair, but the best chair.

The solution was clear to Loos: remove design from its "false prophets" and re-situate it within its rightful place in living culture. What living culture meant for Loos is often quite difficult to clarify. Clearly, much of his polemic was directed toward convincing architects and applied artists to accept the realities of life in a capitalist economic order, though he does not greatly elaborate this notion. This would seem to indicate that he intended to base design upon the living habits of the subjects of the contemporary city, predominantly that group most influential in all aspects of the design process, the middle classes.

Yet, as the above points demonstrate, Loos had great distrust for that set of people he intended as his functional model. Possibly influenced by Nietzsche's dictum that every enhancement of culture has occurred in aristocratic society,⁶⁷ Loos saw the need to entrust cultural decision making to either the aristocracy or established middle classes, those people he saw standing in the forefront of humanity, and who still fully appreciate the needs and striving of those beneath them.⁶⁸ This was ironical in face of the fact that almost all of his clients were from the new, liberal bourgeoisie. Indeed, his fluctuating attitudes on the middle class subject led to a paradoxical predicament: *"einerseits wünscht er mit seinen architektonischen Raum-entwürfen die Autonomie des bürgerlichen Subjekts als überständig zu entlarven, andererseits hält er am bürgerlichen Subjekt-Begriff und dem Bild der Autonomie fest, indem er dieses Subjekt zum entscheidenden Agentur der Geschichte erklärt..."*⁶⁹

Loos's idea of the middle class, like his belief in the classic, was drawn more from a different concept of history than the schools of German idealism and romanticism. His quixotic historical vision of where true culture rests is brought out in "Die alte und die neue Richtung in der Baukunst (1898)," where he argued that: "if architecture is tied onto feeling and habits, it will belong to and be influenced by the uninterrupted buildings already existing for thousands of years."⁷⁰ Contemporary culture, the feelings and habits of an age, therefore, are part of a historical continuum. The urge to reconnect with the stream of history is as strong in Loos as in many other (historicist) writers we have discussed. The difference, as we shall see below, lay in Loos's a-temporal logos.

The bulk of these observations contradict an assessment of Loos as a reckless revolutionary. For him, feelings and habits are formed by exposure to what is lasting, what endures over the course of centuries when all else perishes. Since architecture is that cultural activity which is most enduring by the very nature of its construction in durable materials and purpose to serve seemingly permanent needs, it makes good sense that

architects should be conservative. In approaching a design problem architects should first attempt to situate the new project within a cultural continuum: *"Man sieht nach, welche Bauwerke schon früher im Stande waren, diese Gefühle zu erzeugen. An die muss man anknüpfen."*⁷¹

Later, in "Regeln für den, der in den Bergen baut" (1913), Loos wrote that since the truth, hundreds of years old, has more inner connection with us than the contemporary lie which surrounds us: "changes in the old building ways are only allowed if they mean an advancement. Otherwise, let the old remain."⁷² And later still, in "Heimatkunst" (1914), he echoed those same thoughts, starting off by saying that "I am for the traditional ways of building," and adding that changes in those ways should occur only when necessary. For instance, a new invention (such as the electric light or the cement roof) which tears a hole in worldwide tradition must be taken into account.⁷³ We only import, or change something, when we don't have a better alternative.⁷⁴ As Heinrich Kulka emphasizes the progressive possibilities inherent in tradition, for Loos *"die Tradition bedeutet das ungeheure Kräfte - reservoir von zahllosen Generationen. Wer mit ihr verbunden ist, verfügt über Energien, die ein einzelner, mag er noch so genial sein, niemals erlangen kann."*⁷⁵

It is noteworthy that propriety recurs as a theme in Loos's attempt to identify these boundaries in writings on furniture, clothing, and other practical arts objects. In "Die Herrenmode" (1898), an argument is made against the withering away of dress code regulations: *"Als gradmesser für die kultur eines staates kann der umstand gelten, wie viele seiner einwohner von dieser freiheitlichen errungenschaft gebrauch machen."*⁷⁶ The erasure of such regulations, wrote Loos, encourages otherwise respectable people to dress outrageously in an attempt to distinguish themselves from all others. It supplants style by the styles, and leads to the impersonation of authentic culture in the guise of the parvenu.

Loos's radical ethicism held forth that the first principle of design is to conform to the propriety of one's time. In what seems again to be a tautologous argument, Loos said

that when man belongs to his time he has no need to look either forwards or backwards.⁷⁷ What Loos meant was that the true motives of architecture describe a centripetal force in urban society. The well-designed building conforms to its time. Individuality is an eccentricity to be avoided. Likewise, the point of dress is not to be found in words like *schön, schick, elegant, fesch or frisch*. Rather, "it is a question of being dressed in such a way that one stands out the least...In good society, to be conspicuous is bad manners."⁷⁸ One must not stand out at the center of culture. At this moment, for Loos, it was located in London. Hence, he inferred that: *"Ein Kleidungsstück ist modern, wenn man in demselben im Kulturzentrum bei einer bestimmten gelegenheit in der besten gesellschaft möglichst wenig auffällt."*⁷⁹ At the center of Loos's vision therefore was the well-dressed, almost inconspicuous man of the world city.

As Loos put it later in "Architektur," a house on its exterior should change only so much as a coat. This was a point made a year earlier by Karl Scheffler: *"Früher kleidete sich jeder Stand besonders, der Mensch deutete schon in der Tracht seine soziale Sonderstellung an; heute trägt jeder Mann dasselbe Kleid...Dieser Menge, aus der sich keine Individualität äusserlich hervorhebt, entspricht die Tendenz des uniformen Städtebaues."*⁸⁰ Thus, like one's dress, architecture should suppress arbitrary changes. What matters to Loos is that the external face one presents to the world, on a coat or on a facade, must appear unassuming, and *"modern gekleidet ist der, der am wenigsten auffällt."*⁸¹ Precisely, Loos felt that the house on the Michaelerplatz aroused as much anger as it did because it did not fit in with the eclectic costumes surrounding it. It is as if Loos is saying here a modern-dressed man, emancipated from ornament, had to live amongst fantasy-seekers in a costume ball.

Furthermore, in writing about the layers of culture, Loos drew a sharp distinction between city dwellers and rural people. It was clearly obvious to Loos that once country people adopted the style and dress of the city they would never return to their former

ways. Evolution toward a modern urban outlook cannot be reversed, and the idealization of rural ways is abominable: "*Nie habe ich von abendländisch gekleideten juden die forderung gehört, die juden in galizien mögen den kaftan beibehalten.*"⁸² After all, the man in the city has great advantages over his rural counterpart. He who possesses true urban culture is adaptable immediately to any other environment.⁸³ A Viennese can walk confidently among the country styles (*lederhosen*, etc.), but a farmer cannot share this unconscious ease of movement in the city. The farmer's old customs and habits of dress would never be taken seriously in a world city.

Reproducing Style

Given his respect for the classic, tradition, aristocratic mores, and the cultural continuum which should otherwise stem from them, Loos correlated his theories to a utopic vision of culture. Never did he encourage accepting the chaos of the machine age. Nor was he comfortable with the advance of *Zivilisation*. Like most of his predecessors and contemporaries, modernity for Loos was synonymous with the re-making of society into community, and the re-establishing of *Kultur* in the Austrian lands. The question became: how is it possible to integrate the humanizing values of tradition into contemporary productive processes which meet the needs of the modern city? How, to put it simply, can ethical, technological, and functional values be reconciled?

In rejecting historic styles Loos did not reject the need for discovering the workings of the concept of style itself, if by that concept we understand the integration of functional form and productive capabilities in respect of traditional inheritance. Style signified for Loos the desire of the individual to work for truth. No other ideas of design are possible, and style is hence a normative or nomologic condition. Foremost, it means the true synthesis of use values with cultural values and the rejection of false inheritance and

fashion. Thus a central feature of style as understood by Loos was the determination of the most honest route to a design solution.

Approximately fifty years earlier, the French architectural theorist of medievalism argued a similar point; that the great counterpart to the discussion on the styles was a belief in style as a universal condition. In the penultimate statement of his Dictionnaire raisonné (1854-1868), Viollet-le-Duc's famous aphorism lent a climactic atmosphere to his thoughts on this issue: "There is style; then there are the styles."⁸⁴ On the one hand, styles refer to different epochs, historical times such as the Greek and Gothic. Style, on the other hand, is the precise artistic expression of function. Where Viollet-le-Duc sounded most like Loos would want to sound (if a critical attitude were not needed) was in his espousal of unconscious artistic behavior. We read: "Style is the consequence of a principle pursued methodically; it is a kind of emanation from the form of the work that is not consciously sought after. Style that is sought after is nothing else but manner."⁸⁵ The essential point here is that style is process, and not an object, a mode of creation which "makes the form of an art appropriate to its objective."⁸⁶ Style, in the hands of the architect, develops the work of art, nourishes it, and gives it strength, health and duration. Much of the uncertainty during the nineteenth century, as we have seen, was due to the loss of this instinct of unconsciousness, and the subsequent search for renewed truth.⁸⁷

Viollet-le-Duc's understanding of architectural style as based upon a building's physical functions was clearly related to Semper's typology of architectural elements, and the bulk of materialist tenets of nineteenth century architectural theory. Viollet-le-Duc and the numerous materialists and realists in Germany and Austria understood architectural forms as the expressions of tangible causes, and not ideal decisions. K.E.O. Fritsch's words of 1876 underscore this powerful desire for an understanding of architecture from functional grounds: "*Nicht von oben herab, sondern nur von unten herauf - nicht von aussen, sondern nur von innen kann der Baukunst geholfen werden.*"⁸⁸ This

realist idea of style was probably a great influence on Loos. Even if Loos was no more a strict materialist than Semper, the progressive ideology of eternal values developed by materialism and then realism cast wide resonance. Realism made possible the criticism of the styles from an empirical, and critical, basis. It formed the basis for a renewed conception of style.

Such an idea of style, as opposed to the styles, was clear already in Jacob Falke's Die Kunst Im Hause (1879), where the museum director wrote that the house should - artistically speaking - be cast in one mold; both inside and out it should be the creation of a single artist. Above all, because of his belief that houses should bear the imprint of the unrest of modern life, Falke made clear that the demand for an all-pervading harmony can only be reasonably satisfied when the house is occupied by its owners.⁸⁹ Hence, style is not a matter of looking for something new, or identifying with something old. It looks to things as they are, and not to secondary considerations. Falke wrote:

Style is the idealization of an object, the harmonious adaptation of form to means and end, the identification of the object with itself and its idea. A piece of furniture has style when it is exactly what it ought to be, when it is suited to the purpose for which it was intended, and has that purpose unmistakably inscribed upon it.⁹⁰

Rather than seeking answers in historical epochs, and mechanically copying design processes into formulae, Falke wants us to search for style in the things themselves, and in our own desires, means and ends. Style is a subjective idealization of function. Consequently, architecture should not deceive - through ornament or other artifice - the true reality of forms. Form is, foremost, the language of the idea, and its clear and full expression as style.⁹¹

The contrast which Viollet-le-Duc spelled out between style and manner or fashion occupied other Austrian theorists. As the Viennese architect Heinrich Ferstel regarded the matter in Über Styl und Mode (1883), art is always a struggle between an existing true style and the current false fashion, between *Styl* and *Mode*. Today, in the absence of

speziell stylistischer Grundsätze, Ferstel felt that fashion extends its influence far and wide, caused by the public's taste for commercial speculation, mass production and cheap products. Industry has forgotten its ties to art, and its earlier condition where: *"die volle Uebereinstimmung ihrer Form mit dem vorliegenden Bedürfnisse, was wir mit dem Ausdrücke Styl bezeichnen."*⁹²

In Loos's time, writers internalized the tragic encounter between style and fashion. This reaction provoked, moreover, renewed attention on the qualities of truth and conformity associated with style. Richard Streiter, for his part, wrote of style as a peculiar mood, a special way of giving form.⁹³ Like Semper and Viollet-le-Duc, Streiter recognized the rational appreciation of traditions, function, and technological construction as the principal determinants of style:

die Berücksichtigung der jeweiligen Lebensbedingungen, der Oertlichkeit, des Materials und der Technik, der Zweckmäßigkeit und Gediegenheit in erster Linie zu stellen. Dann wird sich am sichersten und gesündesten aus der Stilmischung etwas Selbstständiges herausentwickeln, was wir als Stil unserer Zeit sehnlich erhoffen.⁹⁴

As we have seen earlier, Karl Scheffler described the relations of style to architecture foremost as functional uniformism: *"Der rechte Charakter, den man Stil zu nennen berechtigt wäre, käme aber erst in unsere Landhauskolonien, wenn im Prinzip die Uniformität herrschte, wenn das Besondere nur darin gesucht würde. mit überall gleichen Mitteln etwas möglichst Vollkommenes zu erreichen."*⁹⁵ Like Viollet-le-Duc, Scheffler considered that a style that grasps entireties and reflects the essentials of its time is created by only the limitations of natural powers.⁹⁶

Finally, it is significant to point out that style was often portrayed as an unconscious presence within the artistic act. The debate on eternal values between the existence of an inborn style and a consciously-applied style with the aid of knowledge became an on-going philosophical controversy within twentieth century architectural discourse. As I've emphasized, the self-conscious awareness which architects had gained

through immersion in history was widely despised. The excesses of historical knowledge, such as indiscriminate antiquarianism, reinvigorated the desire to root out the historicity in architectural thought. Thus, it is likely that Loos's praise of Schinkel as the spiritual father of German architecture stemmed from his conviction in the latter's innocence of the antagonism between history and style.

To be sure, Muthesius praised Schinkel for precisely these incognizant qualities, and stated that although the Prussian architect designed within a style, its forms never ruled him (presumably as they rule the rest of the century's designers), but were ruled by him. In accounting for the death of a precious *Kunstfreude*, Muthesius acknowledged the greatly amplified power which historical (and other) knowledge had imposed over art during the century. The integrity with which Schinkel approached Greek forms would thus no longer be possible in a world in which knowledge about these forms overwhelmed the creative spirit of the architect:

Früher hatte man keine Stile, sondern nur einen gerade herrschenden Geschmack, man bewegte sich in ihm in voller Sicherheit und ohne den geringsten Zweifel an seiner Richtigkeit. Aus diesem Paradies künstlerischer Naivetät wurde die Menschheit vertrieben, nachdem sie von dem Baume der geschichtlichen Erkenntniss gegessen hatte, nachdem sie die Kunst nicht mehr natürlich, sondern mit dem Gesichtswinkel der historischen Schätzung betrachtete. Diese Betrachtungsweise hat der schaffenden Kunst lange den Them benommen.⁹⁷

In short, as the world became thoroughly dominated by *Wissenschaft*, architecture became applied art history.

Grasping style within *Zivilisation* is an essential consideration. Yet, it is precisely here that the persistence of fragmented thinking, historical idealities, and submission to fashion lead to false appearance. Unconscious intuition of style, as was possible in Schinkel's time, is implausible. Realizing this, Loos was not naive as to believe in resurrection of unconscious behavior. Nor did he envision his self-made position as cultural critic as analogous to the humble craftsman whom he admires in his texts. Rather, Loos's theory of history in the practical arts involved three stages of consciousness toward style.

The first stage is that of unconscious craftsman, who easily weaves the artistic spirit of his world into functional, stylistic creations. The second stage, of which Loos is most critical, is that of the conscious practical artist. Here, the artist is overwhelmed by the constant noise of irrelevant background knowledge, losing sight of true needs and meanings. Style is replaced by the styles. The third stage, to which Loos evidently aims, is that of the conscious cultural critic. Assumed to stand above the clamor of the second stage, and able to see into the revelatory recesses of the first stage, the architect as critic is informed by a real sense of human history. Loos evidently intended this outlook to be quite exclusive, and Dagmar Barnouw comments that Loos once said to Wittgenstein, "You and Me": "For Loos there is no way in which a new spirit/form might be articulated by a consensus of the new man. It is not so much created by them, arrived at through a process of trial and error, as it is given, shown to them."⁹⁸ This final notion of a critical self-formative process by which culture constitutes itself was understood by Loos as the select sensibility of a modern sensibility.

What constituted modernity and style for Loos therefore was neither an anarchy of symbolic codes nor a decentered subject. By contrast, re-centering modernity meant drawing boundaries, recognizing those codes which are still functional and those which are outdated. For the Viennese architect and writer, real history is not flux and constant change, but an exercise in judgment between truth and falsehood, a choice between the deceptive antitheses of essence and appearance. It is not enough for Loos to say that an architectural work is rooted in the myriad details of everyday life. Architecture, as a major contributor to the quality of life must do more. It must, in some way, ensure the healthfulness of life. Stylistic innovation in design should respond to practical demands brought upon by real changes. As reason forms the horizon of their activity, architects must stabilize a world of otherwise unpredictable change.

Codes for Architectural Culture

Loos's quest for abiding worth and eternal reason was, alas, impossible given the fluid industrial society and heterogeneous values within which he was surrounded. In his time, the uncontrolled process of invention in the productive realms of modern European society progressively led to ever greater indeterminacies of meaning. Furthermore, the inconsistent values underlying the modern consciousness precluded recovery of clear and stable relationships between the design of buildings and their uses. Yet, as I've underscored throughout, Loos was not unique in persisting in this quest. What is comparable with other writers on architecture and the practical arts was Loos's perseverance to assemble codes of conduct amidst the strains of social change.

Altogether, Loos's project to de-historicize history was an attack on the growing arbitrariness of cultural codes. Not conversant in the scientific language of biology as Viollet-le-Duc had been, Loos did not seek to affirm an order of the natural world. His terrain was the cultural world, and the reality which he sought in architecture presupposed a logical order of human society. Interestingly, he may have inferred inspiration for his world of coherency from Nietzsche's disavowal of attempts at historical order. As critics of academic practices, Nietzsche and Loos were greatly alarmed by the number of historical guests seated at the table of contemporary creation.

In Von Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben (1874) the German philosopher wrote: "The historical sense, if it rules without restraint and unfolds all its implications, uproots the future because it destroys illusions and robs existing things of their atmosphere in which alone they can live."⁹⁹ Nietzsche's argument against the continued displacement of the horizon of cultural perspective by history describes both Loos and Muthesius. It locates the struggle to recover for the architect the sense of wondrous illusion of creativity, and the critical acumen needed to combat the historicism polluting the atmosphere of the age.

Loos too defined the critical path in architecture as the reconstitution of an architectural sensibility unsullied by excessive historical knowledge. His attitude toward culture corresponded somewhat to the framework Nietzsche drew of the critical historian: where past events are dragged to the bar of judgement, interrogated meticulously and if necessary thrust aside.¹⁰⁰ In all his writings, Loos employed such a critical method as a means of reintegrating architecture with what he sees as its evolutionary continuity. The mass of historical information which Nietzsche found so stultifying became for Loos the false multiplicity of historic and artistic images appearing on buildings. Loos, as I have said, was unwilling to accept either the incoherence of historical diversity or the determinacy of historical development offered by nineteenth century historians. Like Nietzsche, Loos resisted the completeness of the developmental vision of world history. This vision left no place for critical corrections.

Under the weight of historicist explanation, Loos counterpoised the chaotic apparitions of his age with a vision of stability drawn from the eighteenth century ideas on rationalism. This vision is exemplified by the idea of progress. Progress, as a universal standard of human achievement accessible to reason, implies a continuous process of failures and setbacks. Man's history is not a self-fulfilling operation, a continuous development. Rather, it is a condition where human intervention through the mediums of education and critical analysis determine success.¹⁰¹ True, Loos professed that all good design proceed within the bounds of its age, and it may be the case that this delineation was influenced by Hegel; by virtue of its construction in dialectical stages, not to mention its avowal of historical direction toward ornament-less design. Yet, far from teleologically envisioning the eventual spiritualization of all material production, Loos was pre-eminently obsessed with adapting the external changes of the world to the internal material workings of design. His acceptance of his age was discriminating. More to the point, his theory of

historical change transformed what was a linear development of the spirit of design into a cyclical historical scheme whereby style is to be rescued by critical intervention.

Given his advocacy of criticism and condemnation of developmental indeterminacy, it is clear that Loos's idea of style differed from Riegl's concept of the *Kunstwollen*. In the 1890s, Riegl's discussion of the spiritual revolution of late Roman art was widely interpreted as a metaphor for modernism. Riegl's project on this era of antiquity incited uncommon attention because he foregrounded the meaning of forms through a natural connection to their content. The close attention given to the new values of Christianity as the key to the hitherto misunderstood forms of late antiquity seemed to provide an interpretive model for envisioning the meaning of the new utilitarian architectural forms arising out of industrial society. Still, while Riegl's advocacy of modern sensibilities may have positively influenced Loos, the particulars underlying the concept of the *Kunstwollen* likely did not. Riegl's *Kunstwollen* was deeply influenced by Hegelian teleology. Constituting a semi-autonomous realm of artistic impulses, an artist or architect is dominated by large abstract forces moving through history. While Loos may have agreed to some degree with Riegl that the architect is the inheritor of a historical mission, Loos must have been uncomfortable with both the revolutionary cast of this mission and the limited role to which the subject can alter the details of the mission itself. The *Kunstwollen*, after all, forecast a developmental understanding of historical determinacy, an imperative to respond to drives beyond the control of any single person.

It is true that similar to both Hegel and Riegl's philosophies, Loos understood changes in building forms as the result of material and social innovations. Design begins with traditional means and methods only to be confronted by new innovations or problems. Those elements of tradition are retained which profitably survive within the new cultural code introduced by innovation, and regressive elements of tradition are obliterated. But, the cyclical nature of Loos's dialectic meant that regressive elements persist. History, far

from evenly moving toward an a-material condensation, is dissonant, plagued by the unlawful. It retains imperfections, as regressive elements such as ornament remain long after their time has gone. Moreover, since history does move uniformly toward its own dissolution, the architect has a paramount role to intervene in the interests of progress.

Like the Enlightenment philosophers, Loos did not propose to accept historical chaos or the annulment of progress in modern times. His historiography demanded an important role for both ethical and individual action. This sounds at first to be a contradiction given Loos's widespread condemnation of the individual. Yet his praise for the critical architect differs greatly from his contempt for the mass of misguided individuals who characterize contemporary society. Specifically, Loos's desire to ethicize the individual relates to the need for a critical subject in history. The ethically-minded subject must distinguish reality from artifice, objective materials from subjective images. He must differentiate the healthy space of productive activity from the degenerate space of the parvenu. While opposed to a free individualism which leads to a state of representation without meaning, Loos felt the need for individualistic criticism which promotes social order. He recognized the need for intervention in the cycles of history, and the emergence of the critical theorist of architecture in his texts represents his confidence in the possibility of achieving truthful design.

In conformity with his notion of style, his philosophy of history consisted of the condensation of the alterity of modern identity onto a two-part cultural field; a linear sequence progressing out of prehistory; and, more importantly, a series of cultural hierarchies at any given point in that sequence. While cognizant of the necessary diachronic movement of taste, technology, and social organization in time, Loos collapsed the points of this sequence into an enveloping synchronic realm of ethical values. What rings clear throughout this understanding of history is a complex evaluation of historical time: an idealist nostalgia for the pre-modern age and aristocratic mores; a rejection of the

second half of the nineteenth century and the commodification of the arts and crafts; an affirmation of the importance of the present, of functional needs in the modern city.

This project roused pragmatic proposals and equally existential speculations. In his program for architecture Loos outlined a course of action based as much on rational empiricism as abstract idealism. While professing to design within the bounds of the present, Loos never chose to accept the indeterminacies of industrial life. As we know, he did not recognize in his texts the importance of the new technologies of iron and reinforced concrete, and made frequent reference to pre-industrial tools. If Loos's ideas seem contradictory, it is because they embody the discrepancies of maintaining humanist values in the modern age. Whereas he accepted that the fruitful unity of the Baroque age of Fischer von Erlach was lost, he also yearned to regain a comparable form of *Kultur* in the twentieth century. By consulting the design logic of classicism as his guide to the present, he sought an *a priori* understanding of architectural design where form and need are in perfect correspondence. His professed acceptance of society was pretense. As it was, his words openly betray an idealism for static values completely uncharacteristic of capitalist commerce. Whereas Loos realized that historical memory was a major element of culture, his critique of that memory bank attempted to erase the gap in consciousness that the writing of history had created between the past and present. It represents a stage in the modernist strategy to reunite the observable object with the discerning subject.

In an age of ceaseless and often chaotic fermentation, Adolf Loos believed in progress and wholeness, and yet also accepted degeneracy and division. Given to drawing boundaries, Loos realized better than many of his contemporaries that society was heterogeneous and that wholeness could not be achieved through the entire range of cultural life. His depiction of the need for separate artistic and utilitarian realms was a perceptive recognition of the fragmentation characteristic of the modern age. Yet, his insistence on sharp boundaries was also indicative of his ambition to recreate totality in a

restricted sphere. That his texts remain paradoxical is proof of his impulse to the contradictory positions of estrangement and consolidation. As much as anyone else, Loos expressed the dominant conflicts of a modernist consciousness, that unease of subjective identity in a world of heterologous knowledge.

Notes

1. Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge, p. 12.
2. Vincent Descombes, Modern French Philosophy [1979], trans. L. Scott-Fox and J.M. Harding (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge, 1980), p. 108.
3. Wlad Godzich, "The Further Possibility of Knowledge," forward to Michel de Certeau, Heterologies (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1986), p. xiii.
4. Gurlitt, Die deutsche Kunst..., p. 321.
5. Streiter, p. 68.
6. Heinrich Goesch, "Die Stellung der Architekturgeschichte zum Schaffen des Architekten," Deutsche Bauhütte 13.1909, p. 193.
7. Muthesius regarded Winckelmann in that context as "ein rückwärts blickender Idealist." "Architektonische Zeitbetrachtungen," p. 126.
8. See J.J. Winckelmann, Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums (Berlin, 1757).
9. Fritsch, "Stil-Betrachtungen," p. 418.
10. Wilhelm Lübke, Geschichte der Architektur (Leipzig: E.A. Seemann, 1870), p. 780.
11. L. Trzeschtk, "Stilverschmelzung und Zukunftstil," ZPBK 36.1876, p. 173.
12. Those of the Gothic are: clarity, solidity, painterly, poetic, powerful. Those of the Renaissance are: rich decoration, reminiscences of the antique.
13. L. Trzeschtk, "Die Moderne Architektur," ABZ 54.1889, p. 38.
14. Jacob Prestel, "Die Architektur der Zukunft," Der Architekt 3.1897, p. 41.
15. See Constantin Lipsius, Gottfried Semper in seiner Bedeutung als Architekt (Berlin: Deutschen Bauzeitung), p. 100.
16. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Genealogy of Morals, trans. Francis Golffing (New York: Anchor, 1956), p. 210.
17. Eitelberger, Kunstgewerbliche Zeitfragen, p. 300
18. ILG, p. 81.
19. PS, p. 66.
20. PS, p. 67.
21. ILG, p. 81.

22.As Roland Schachel describes the concept of totality on Loos, he brings up the possible influence of Richard Wagner's music and his text, Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft, on the architect: "Sie muß daher als eine der Wurzeln für Loos' Denken bis hin zur Kunstförderung und zu den Richtlinien für ein Kunstamt von eminenter Bedeutung gewesen sein." "Aufgaben einer Loos-Biographie," Adolf Loos, p. 28.

23.ILG, p. 68.

24.ILG, p. 70.

25.T, p. 91.

26.T, p. 42.

27.T, p. 44.

28.T, p. 42.

29.T, p. 49.

30.T, p. 90.

31.T, p. 91.

32.T, p. 91.

33.T, pp. 93-94.

34.Scheffler, "Ein Weg zum Stil," p. 291.

35.Scheffler, "Antike und Modern," p. 193.

36.Ibid., p. 194.

37.For a discussion of the emergence of the concepts "modern", "classic", and "ancient" during the Middle Ages and Renaissance see the chapter entitled "The Idea of Modernity" in Matei Calinescu, Five Faces of Modernity (Durham, N.C.: Duke, 1987), pp. 13 - 92.

38.Gurlitt, Die deutsche Kunst, p. 649.

39.Gurlitt, "Die Theorien der Baukunst im XIX. Jahrhundert," p. 153.

40.Cornelius Gurlitt, "Deutsche Baukunst," DKuD V. Oct.1899 - March 1900, p. 214.

41.Gurlitt, "Die Theorien der Baukunst im XIX. Jahrhundert," p. 175.

42.Gurlitt, "Ziele der Architektur im neuen Jahrhundert," pp. 14-15.

43.Gurlitt, "Die Theorien der Baukunst im XIX. Jahrhundert," p. 174.

44.Hirt, p. 16.

45.T, p. 65.

46.T, p. 66.

47.ILG, p. 36.

48.ILG, p. 89.

49.PS, p. 65.

50.Semper, perhaps on account of his resumption of Renaissance motives, is considered backward by Loos.

51.PS, p. 66.

52.T, p. 65.

53.Aldo Rossi, "Introduction," in Gravagnuolo, Adolf Loos, Theory and Works, p. 13.

54.T, p. 103.

55.T, p. 104.

56.Dietmar Steiner, "The Strength of the Old Masters: Adolf Loos and Antiquity," in The Architecture of Adolf Loos, p. 24.

57.ILG, p. 90.

58.Likewise, in "Architektur," Loos wrote that before the 19th century people were united with the architecture of their time. The latest house pleased all. Today only developers and architects like most houses.

59.PS, p. 57.

60.PS, p. 58.

61.Streiter, p. 90.

62.ILG, p. 34.

63.In "Wanderungen durch die Winterausstellung des Oesterreichischen Museums" (1898) Loos stressed the pre-eminent value of aristocratic taste. He recalled the socialization of the Darwinian law, that the striving of the people to receive the higher position of the aristocracy leads them to adapt their taste to that of the upper classes. ILG, p. 80.

64.ILG, p. 29.

65.To this end, Loos commented that while it is rare for bourgeois furniture to be preserved, as it is worn out through use, the furniture of princes was never used. ILG, p. 28.

66.ILG, p. 29.

67. Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1966), p. 201.

68.T, p. 86.

69. Michael Müller, p. 139.

70.PS, p. 64.

71.PS, p. 64.

72.T, p. 121.

73.T, p. 125.

74.T, p. 129.

75. Kulka, p. 16.

76. ILG, p. 55.

77.T, pp. 91-92.

78. ILG, p. 55.

79. ILG, p. 57.

80. Scheffler, "Ein Weg zum Stil," p. 295.

81.T, p. 99.

82.T, p. 24.

83.T, p. 23.

84. Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-Le-Duc, The Foundations of Architecture, Selections from the Dictionnaire raisonné, trans. Kenneth D. Whitehead (New York: George Braziller, 1990), p. 231.

85. Ibid., p. 256.

86. Ibid., p. 232.

87. Schumacher, Strömungen..., p. 55.

88. Fritsch, "Wie kann die Baukunst wieder volksthümlich gemacht werden?" p. 384.

89. Falke, Art in the House: Historical Critical and Aesthetical Studies on the Decoration and Furnishing of the Dwelling, trans. Charles A. Perkins (Boston: L. Prang, 1879), pp. 165-166.

90. Ibid., pp. 171-172.

91. Ibid., p. 183.

92. Heinrich von Ferstel, Über Styl und Mode (Wien: Niederösterreichischen Gewerbevereines, 1883), p. 7.
93. Streiter, p. 57.
94. Ibid., p. 28.
95. Scheffler, Moderne Baukunst, p. 80.
96. Beyond architectural circles, an a-temporal idea of style also gained a following. The German sociologist, Georg Simmel, took umbrage to the idea of a plurality of historical styles. As he saw the situation, the deeper impression that an art work makes on us, the less important is the role played by historical styles. In the works of Michelangelo, for instance, the question of which style it belongs to becomes completely indifferent. Here, Simmel pointed out, the harmonious wholeness of the artwork takes us fully into its power. "*Stil is immer diejenige Formgebung, die, soweit sie den Eindruck des Kunstwerkes trägt oder tragen hilft, dessen ganz individuelles Wesen und Wert, seine Einzigkeitsbedeutung verneint.*" Style is the generalization of the individual, a principle of generality. "Das Problem des Stiles," Dekorative Kunst 16.1908, p. 307.
97. Muthesius, "Architektonische Zeitbetrachtungen," p. 127.
98. Barnouw, p. 271.
99. Friedrich Nietzsche, Von Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben (Indianapolis, 1980), p. 34.
100. Ibid., p. 21.
101. See Mandelbaum, pp. 52-53.

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